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THE BLACK PRINCE



EFFIGY OF THE BLACK PRINCE
FROM HIS TOMB AT CANTERBURY

THE BLACK PRINCE

BY

R. P. DUNN-PATTISON, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "NAPOLEON'S MARSHALS"

WITH EIGHTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS AND
SIX MAPS AND PLANS

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INTRODUCTION

THE fourteenth century is still one of the undiscovered pages of the world's history. Abroad Monsieur Luce and Baron Lettenhove are among its best known explorers, while lately in England Mr. Armitage Smith has the honour of leading the way. I, unfortunately, cannot claim to have done any original research and have had to content myself with using the labours of others. I hope, however, that my modest efforts may inspire some future historian with the desire of writing a really great history of the Black Prince. A hundred years ago Gibbon refused the task, saying that there was not then sufficient material. In our own time Monsieur Luce died before he was ready to undertake the work. The only two modern books on the subject are James' "Life of the Black Prince," and Moisant's book, "Le Prince noir en Aquitaine." James, writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, had not the advantage of present-day research, and overloaded his book with the narration of political

events. Thus he failed to present a vivid portrait of the Prince. Monsieur Moisant, in his excellent work, confined himself to the Prince's administration of Aquitaine. My object has been, to the best of my ability, to present to the general reader a sketch of the Prince's character.

With this in view I have read through both the English and French chroniclers of that age, and most of the modern works dealing with the fourteenth century. Those who care to go deeper into this most interesting subject, I would refer to the bibliographies in Mr. Armitage Smith's "John of Gaunt," Mr. Tout's volume of Longman's "Political History of England," and Monsieur Moisant's "Le Prince noir en Aquitaine." The three most important contemporary authorities are undoubtedly Froissart, the Chandos Herald and Baker's "Chronicle." Much useful matter may be found in the appendix of Mr. Beltz's "History of the Garter." Mr. Beltz was fortunate enough to have access to a manuscript containing the Prince's accounts. This manuscript I have failed to trace. Rymer's "Fœdera" and the Calendars of the Patent and Close Rolls I have found extremely useful: but unfortunately the Calendars for the reign of Edward III. are not yet published beyond the year 1361. As I have said before there exists, both in England and France, a vast amount of material which has not yet been published.

Though my book has no claims to learning, I think I

ought to say a word as to the most debatable points in the life of my hero. I am afraid that anybody who reads through Monsieur Moisant's book, and verifies his authorities, will be compelled to own that the Prince neglected the administration of Aquitaine. A reference to the Calendars of the Patent and Close Rolls will prove that in England he had considerable trouble with his tenants. The entries in Rymer's "Fœdera" and the analysis of his expenditure, given by Monsieur Moisant, will prove his extravagance, the extent of his debts, and the consequent necessity of extracting the uttermost farthing from his tenants. As regards his alleged jealousy of his brother John of Gaunt, I incline to believe, with Mr. Armitage Smith, that the "Chronicon Angliæ" is greatly biassed. Still, as the proverb says, there is never smoke without fire, and I see some trace of suspicion of his brother in the Prince's anxiety to secure the recognition of his young son Richard before the expedition to Thouars.

I think my view of the Prince's attitude at the time of the Good Parliament needs no further explanation. As regards the campaigns, I have, on the whole, followed the views of Professor Oman. But I must refer to the vexed question of the Battle of Poitiers. The point is this: the Chandos Herald distinctly states that the Prince's advance guard had retired over the Miausson before the battle began. Baker in his "Chronicle" says there was no retirement, but that the French mistook,

as a retreat, a movement made to occupy a hill on the right flank. Both the Herald and Baker were present at the battle. Professor Oman accepts the Herald's story; Professor Maund Thompson holds with Baker. I have accepted both stories as not being incompatible, and above all as furnishing the only explanation of how the various "battles" came into action in the order in which all the authorities agree they did.

One word more; as regards the disputed question of the origin and of the date of the institution of the Garter, I have based my conclusions on the careful evidence given by Mr. Beltz in his book, "The Memorials of the Order of the Garter."

In conclusion, I should like to thank all those who have helped me in my work, especially Mr. R. E. E. Chambers, of Pill House, Barnstaple, for many suggestions, and Mr. W. N. Weech, of Cheltenham College, and Captain A. J. Campbell, of my old regiment, for reading my abominable writing and pruning my English.

KILBOWIE, BRAUNTON

ICH DIEN

HERO OF CRECY'S FIELD, AND CARTERED KNIGHT !
FIRST OF THY LINE TO LIFT THE LEGEND HIGH
ON BLAZONED CREST, THROUGH WHICH THE TRUTH DOTH SHINE,
THAT PRINCELY POWER AND STRENGTH IN SERVICE LIE—
NO KINGLIER FORM DOTH PASS THROUGH HISTORY'S PAGE,
THOUGH KINGLY DIADEM THOU DIDST NOT WEAR—
STILL ENGLAND HOLDS HER BLACK PRINCE HIGH IN FAME,
AND EVERY PRINCE OF WALES THY BADGE DOTH BEAR.

M. K. D. P.

THE BLACK PRINCE

CHAPTER I

THE PRINCE'S PARENTAGE

WHILE men of science are still disputing the relative claims of heredity and environment in the formation of character, the duty of the historian must at all times be one of great difficulty. Greater still must be that difficulty when for mental environment we have that curious mixture of paradoxes which we call the spirit of the fourteenth century, when the lines of heredity are half hidden in the misty sketches of some biassed Court or monkish chronicler.

Taking these facts into consideration, we no longer wonder that the character of the great soldier, who flashes forth at Crecy to rise later to the full glory of Poitiers and Najera, is still a mere matter of speculation. Further, we must call to mind that, owing to his premature death, the fierce light which beats upon a throne never fell upon his actions, but was directed with scorching brilliancy on the shallow ambitions of his son Richard, and the pertinacious selfishness of his brother, John of Gaunt.

The fourteenth century is pre-eminently the age of chivalry, and according to our view of that chivalry so must be our estimate of the life and the character of the Black Prince. If with Burke we can truthfully see in chivalry "The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise . . . that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness," then we must confess that he whom the nations of Europe regarded as the beau ideal of chivalry, the flower of the English knighthood, the *preux* chevalier, the perfect gentle knight, is great not only as a soldier, but as a man—the finest product of his age.

But if we see in chivalry nothing but a cruel selfishness wrapped up in the glitter of false sentiment, the glorification of the few at the expense of the many, then high as we may place the Black Prince among the ranks of successful commanders, we shall be compelled to displace him from the lofty pedestal on which he stands in the world, not of reality but of romance.

It is the business of the critical historian to consider the actions and character of his subject from the point of view of the ethical standard of the time in which he lived: he may safely, in most cases, leave the reader to observe the difference between the morals of then and now.

The great house of Plantagenet traces its origin to the valiant forester Tortulf, who in the days of Charles

the Simple, "half hunter, half bandit," turned the Danish pirates out of Touraine. It was his grandson, Fulk the Red, who first carved out for himself the little county of Anjou.

The descendants of Fulk were a remarkable race : a strong family likeness ran through them all. Be it good or evil, whatever they did, they did it with all their might. Great and varied natural powers, exceptional military capacity, and a deep political insight marked them all.

For three centuries the strain ran sturdy and strong, and mingled with the noblest blood of Europe. The early Plantagenet kings of England, Henry II., Richard, and John, were all in their way true to the Angevin breed. With Henry III. the fire seemed to weaken, only to blaze again in all its power in the person of Edward I., the great legislator and administrator, the farseeing statesman whose aim was a united Britain. But with Edward II. the true signs of decay are only too visible. For the first time in the history of the race a prince had arisen whose only spur to action was pleasure ; who was roused neither by duty nor ambition. Rough as were his ancestors, fierce alike in the passions of the flesh and the spirit, at none of them could the taunt have been hurled "*Rex illiteratus est asinus coronatus*" ; still less would the boldest prophet have ventured to foretell that a Plantagenet would forfeit his crown through apathy and cowardice.

Edward III. succeeded to the throne, on the deposition of his father by his mother Isabella and her

paramour Mortimer. His position was an anomalous one, as he owed his crown at the age of fifteen to the unworthy actions of his mother and the fickle wind of popular favour. At first he seemed a mere cypher in the hands of the wicked Queen. Yet youth could not be pleaded as an excuse for his inaction, for many an Angevin had held, and capably held, the reins of government at an equally early age. It seemed as if he had inherited the fatal lethargy of his father. The future, however, soon disclosed that, though Edward had unfortunately inherited the vain taste for pleasure, which had caused his father's ruin, the true blood of the Plantagenets ran hot in his veins.

Obedient to his mother's commands, he married, in 1328, Philippa, the daughter of Isabella's great supporter, the Count of Hainault, who had furnished the expeditionary force whereby Edward II. had been deposed. The *mariage de convenance* was also, one thinks, a marriage of love. History tells us that the negotiations were entrusted to that Bishop Orlton who, at the end of the reign of the late King, had so successfully fanned into open rebellion the embers of discontent which had led to the deposition of Edward II. The young King Edward approached the Bishop and gave him the real clue to his inclinations. Accordingly the Bishop had no difficulty in selecting Philippa from among the numerous progeny of the Count of Hainault. In quaint verse the chronicler tells us how Edward's momentous choice was made.

"He sent furth then to Henauld for a wife
A bishop and other lordes temporall,
Where in chaumbre preuy and secretife,
As semyng was to estate virginal,
Among them selves our lordes for hie prudence,
Of the bishop asked counsaill and sentence,

Which doughter of five should be the quene ;
Who counsailled thus with sad auisement,
Wee will have hir with good (hippis I mene)
For she will bere good soonnes at myne intent ;
To whiche thei all accorded by one assent,
And chase Philip that was full femine,
As the bishop moost wise did determyne."

Even marriage did not rouse Edward from his apathy. It was not till the birth of his son, Prince Edward, in 1330, that he rose to the responsibility of his position. Then, with Plantagenet thoroughness and swiftness of action, he made short work of the Queen and her guilty paramour, and with firm grip on the helm of State displayed the characteristics of his race.

At once he grasped the fact that his father had lost his throne by losing Scotland : that war, glory, expansion, and trade lay at the root of national life. The last three could in that age only be gained by the first. While war, the sport of kings, fed the ambition and the pride of a Plantagenet, it also added, though only temporarily, to the glory, the expansion, and the trade of England. We must ever remember how through the policy of Edward III. ran the double thread of personal ambition and of national necessity. The Scotch war was in one sense the mandate given to the Crown at the

deposition of Edward II. : it was the popular realisation of the fact that Britain was too small to contain two rival kingdoms. From another point of view, the Scotch war was the price paid by Edward for his crown and an opportunity to satisfy his longings for glory. In the French war also we see the double purpose. It was the only means of protecting the English wool trade with Flanders, the staple industry of the country ; it was also the means of enabling Edward to gratify his personal pride by claiming the crown of France, and it afforded him a pretext to carry on a war which made the King of England the most commanding personality in Europe.

Edward III. had all the rashness of the Plantagenets (as we shall see in the campaign of 1346, and in the ambush laid at Calais in 1349), but Plantagenet-like this rashness was less foolhardy than at first sight appeared, for we must remember how well he knew the temper of the instrument which he and his grandfather had hammered into shape in the Scotch wars and the campaigns in Guienne. Edward, like his forebears, was noted for outbursts of that awful temper which men said his ancestor, Fulk, inherited from the devil. He did not, like the tawny, bullet-headed Henry II. lie on his back screaming in paroxysms of rage, but he vented his passion on those around him, be they servants or his prisoners, like the unfortunate Seatons.

Piety he displayed in the Plantagenet style. He founded churches and he endowed canonries, as his predecessors had done before him, but, like them, he at

times showed an odd vein of scepticism. He did not, like Henry II., spend his time at Mass in whispering, scribbling, and looking at picture-books ; but like him, in moments of wild frenzy, he would curse God. Moreover, at times his prayers were quaint indeed, as when he reproved the Virgin Mary because his voyages to France were always smooth but his return journeys tempestuous and stormy. "Saint Mary my blessed Lady, what should be the meaning of this? that always in my passage to France the winds and seas befriend me, but in my return to England, I meet with nothing but adverse storms and destructive tempests."

He had, moreover, in his ecclesiastical policy much of the wisdom of the serpent. Indeed, in his attitude towards the Papacy he showed great tact. He accepted the spiritual position of the Pope, but, in general, his attitude, though he did not express it so forcibly, was very much that of Louis of Bavaria, the Holy Roman Emperor, who wrote thus to Pope John XXII.: "Thine uncontrollable power we firmly believe, thine arrogance we cannot endure, thy boundless avarice we are unable to satisfy : the Devil be with thee, for God is with us."

Accordingly we find Edward had no compunction in passing statutes to withhold the Papal dues and tributes ; at the same time that he allowed the Pope to interfere freely in the appointment of bishops and archbishops, and this, too, during the Babylonish captivity, when the pontiff was a mere creature and pensioner of the King of France, an exile from Rome, and a puppet at Avignon.

Shrewdness, that badge of the Plantagenets, was a marked trait in the King's character. He instituted the Order of the Garter as a stimulus to glory. He saw clearly the possibilities of the mercenary soldier, and he laid the foundation of the standing army: he foresaw the future commercial greatness of England; he fostered her sea trade and prepared the way for her command of the sea.

In his political character Edward III., like Richard I., was a mere opportunist. If he needed money he cared little what promises he made so long as he got it. The result of this policy was, on the whole, beneficial to the welfare of England. Edward might, and not unfrequently did, break his promises and withdraw his concessions; the country was often unduly drained of money and heavily taxed; private individuals were ruined; the foreign bankers of Italy, notably the firms of the Bardi and the Peruzzi at Florence, were rendered bankrupt when Edward refused to pay his debts; but the leaders of the nascent constitutional party took good care that concessions once granted, should, though revoked, be ever claimed as precedents, and the results of Edward's wars and extravagance were that England gained a new consciousness of unity and importance.

In his private character, as in his public, the dominant note was extravagance. Hard exercise in the field, war and the affairs of State scarcely sufficed to occupy his younger years, and as old age advanced the sensual side of his character came more and more to the front; the



QUEEN PHILIPPA AND ONE OF HER DAUGHTERS

good Queen Philippa once dead, Edward's life flickered feebly out under the nauseous rule of Alice Perrers.

Edward, like most men of mark, has suffered both from too great praise and too great defamation. To those of his own age he was in many ways a great king. With his godlike face, strength, and courage, his brilliant success in war, and his courtesy in the hour of victory, he has dazzled many generations. But to the student of constitutional growth England owes comparatively little to the king, but much to the reign. Perhaps the best way to estimate him at his true worth is to remember that England during his reign was just reaching the age of manhood, and Edward himself, whom his contemporaries regard as the very type of his age, had embodied in his character the virtues and the vices which dominate man's youth, when the flesh is yet strong and the spirit weak.

We turn from Edward to Philippa with a sigh of relief. There was so much promise in the King's character, and yet we found so much to blame. In Philippa we find great promise and great performance. The fortunes of the Hainault house sprang from nearly the same circumstances as those that moulded Anjou. The Hainaulters themselves had never gained a crown, but their daughters had married into the royal races of Europe, and Philippa's aunt had been Queen of France.

Philippa was but a few months younger than her husband, and they made a striking pair; Edward with his six feet of manhood, Philippa "full feminine" with

"roseate hues and beauty bright." But here the likeness ends. Edward was extravagant and fond of show, of the tournament, and of the pomps of wars. Philippa above all loved the quiet and peace of the country, the garden of Woodstock, or the open, healthy downs of King's Langley. Her delight was, far from the bustle of the court, to watch her children growing up under her eye; to endue them, if possible, with the grace of her own mind; to teach them to find an interest in other things than the mere satisfaction of pleasure, healthy though that pleasure might be. We often find her taking the young Prince Edward to see the woollen manufactures she had established at Norwich, to stimulate his interest in what was the foundation of England's future wealth. She encouraged all that was best in art and literature, and brought her sons into contact with it. Chaucer, the first English poet, was of her household. Froissart, the ubiquitous historian of the age, was attached to her Court. Unfortunately for England her children favoured Anjou rather than Hainault.

Philippa herself was sweet-tempered and never bore malice. As Queen, she claimed, after the battle of Neville's Cross, that John Copland, the captor of the King of Scotland, should hand over his august prisoner to her care. After his refusal and journey to France to lay the question before Edward, she treated him with quiet courtesy. It was well that the Queen's disposition was so sweet and gentle, for often it fell to her to pacify the wrath of the King. We find her saving the life of the wretched carpenters at Cheapside, and the citizens

of Calais ; on all occasions showing sympathy and tact, getting up out of bed and seeking new lodging in her nightdress when the monks of St. Cuthbert were scandalised at a lady sleeping in their monastery ; ever mindful, even in the hour of her death, of her dependants and those who had claims on her.

As a Queen Philippa was fully conscious of her duties. Much as she preferred domestic life, she was ready to sacrifice her personal tastes for the good of her country ; and even when heavy with child, to follow the King to Calais or Ghent, or the Low Countries ; to put fresh courage in the local militia at the battle of Neville's Cross, and to sacrifice her sons and daughters on behalf of their country. Further, Queen Philippa did much for the well-being of England. She started the coal industry at Newcastle, and the woollen industry in East Anglia, and under her care a fresh home for literature and science was provided by her chaplain, who founded Queen's College, Oxford. To spend herself for her husband, her sons, and her people was Philippa's life work, and few have better deserved the device she chose for herself, " *Iche wurde muche* " (I toil much).

" . . . Philippe la roigne,
Qui fut la parfite racine
De tout honour et noblete
De sens, valeur et largité."

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCE'S YOUTH

PRINCE EDWARD, the eldest son of Queen Philippa and Edward III., was born at 10 a.m. on the morning of June 16, 1330, at Woodstock. Contemporary chroniclers expatiate on the size and vigour of the child. That he was a strikingly well-made, handsome babe we know, for the lovely Philippa and the princely boy formed the favourite models for the Virgin and the Child at that era. As we have already indicated, like many another young prince, the unconscious babe at once exerted a profound influence on the politics of the day. The King, his father, showed his royal delight at the news by granting to the messenger, Thomas Prior, fifty marks per annum out of his Exchequer, and, later, settled on him lands to this value. The Prince's nurse, Joan of Oxford, received a pension of ten pounds per annum, while Matilda Plumpton, the rocker of the royal cradle, was granted a pension of ten marks. To celebrate further the birth of his eldest son the King held a tournament in London. "The mondaie after Saint Matthew's day in September,

the king held a solemne juste in Cheapside, betwixt the great crosse and Soperlane, he with twelve as chalengers answering all defendants that came. This solemne juste and tournie continued three daies. The queene with manie ladies being present at the same, fell beside a stage, but yet, as good hap would, they had no hurt by the fall, to the rejoicing of manie that saw them in such danger, and yet so luckilie to escape without harme."

The King was furious at this accident which nearly ended the life of his beloved wife, and at once ordered off to execution the carpenters who had erected the stage. But Philippa's good sense and compassion prevented such a hasty and brutal act, and at her request the unfortunate men were reprieved.

But what was far more important than pensioning messengers and nurses, and holding tournaments, the King, from June 15th onwards, began to feel the responsibilities of his position, both as a father and a king, and in October, at the instigation of his cousin, the Earl of Lancaster, he took the kingly power into his own hands, and put an end to the degradation of himself and his kingdom, by executing Mortimer, the guilty paramour, usurper and tyrant, and placing the equally guilty Queen-mother, Isabella, in honourable confinement at Castle Rising.

Prince Edward's early days were spent for the most part at Woodstock, the old hunting palace of the early Plantagenets. There, in the great park surrounded by the seven miles of masonry, erected by Henry I. to contain his collection of "lions, leopards, hineas and

porpentine," he laid that foundation of health and vigour which was to make his deeds of arms famous over Europe. We may presume that, by the days of Prince Edward, the "lions, leopards, hineas and porpentine" no longer inhabited the Park of Woodstock. Still, doubtless, one of the young Prince's earliest recollections would be of the lion, the lioness, and the two cat lions which were kept in the Tower of London under the custody of Robert, son of John Bowre.

In the early days of her motherhood Philippa had not yet chosen Hatfield and King's Langley as the royal nursery palaces. Moreover, by the King's command the young Prince was bound to follow his mother, and his mother had to follow the Court. Exigencies of finance and the necessity of constantly keeping an eye on various parts of his dominion, and of showing himself from time to time to his loyal subjects, necessitated continual royal progresses. Accordingly the young Prince's quarters were seldom settled for any length of time. Within six months from the day of his birth he had visited Osney, Northampton, Clyve, Stamford, Lincoln, Nottingham, and Westminster. The King himself had a great preference for Windsor, the place of his own birth, and no doubt a capital hunting centre within reach of the forests and moors of Hampshire. Still the Court constantly gravitated to Woodstock, a very favourite royal residence. The Queen loved it owing to its peace and beauty, and to the healthiness of the climate, while the King found there those engrossing hunting pursuits which his appetite for sport demanded.

A royal prince, be he never so small, must have an establishment of his own and the means to keep it up. Since the days of Henry III., when the Palatinate earldom of Chester had escheated to the Crown, this earldom had been usually set aside for the maintenance of the heir apparent. Accordingly as early as September 16, 1330, Edward ear-marked five hundred marks per annum from the proceeds of the Chester earldom for the maintenance of his eldest son. Six months later, finding that the provision was not sufficient, he put aside and placed in the Queen's hands the whole revenue from the earldom for the maintenance of the young Edward and his own sister Eleanor. Further, on the 18th of May, 1333, he created Prince, Edward Earl of Chester, and granted him the castles of Chester, Beston, Rothelan, and Flynt. The earldom of Chester included certain Welsh lands known as the Cantreds. These lands, and all the revenues, and royalties, and privileges, and franchises pertaining thereto were included in the grant, even to the arrears due from these lands to the King himself.

The grant of the earldom was made to the young Prince, "and to his heirs Kings of England." Accordingly, from that day to this, the eldest son of the sovereign of England is created Earl of Chester. As the young Prince grew up and his expenses increased Edward made further provision for him. Before he was quite seven years old, on the 17th of March, 1337, he created him Duke of Cornwall. From the days of the Conqueror to John, the Kings of England had been both

Kings of England and Dukes of Normandy, and even now the King of England holds the Channel Isles by the title of Duke of Normandy. Since the time of Henry II. the English kings had been Dukes of Aquitaine, but save for this, in England, the rank and title of Duke was then unknown.

The ceremony of investiture was performed in full Parliament at Westminster, and was by the sword alone. The grant included the Stannaries, with the privilege of coinage and also certain manors and franchises in the County of Devon. The Duchy and these lands were to descend "to the said Duke, and to the eldest sons of him and his heirs Kings of England," and no part of the Duchy could be permanently alienated. To this day the Duchy of Cornwall forms one of the dignities, which are the inherent right of the eldest son of the sovereign of England.

As soon as the young Prince was old enough to "learn his book," at his mother's instigation, the King appointed as his tutor Dr. Walter Burley, a pupil of Duns Scotus, and a friend of William Ockham. Burley was a man of considerable tact and perspicacity, and between 1330 and 1333 was employed by the King, on several occasions, on missions to the Papal Court. As was customary in that age, several boys of good birth and position were added to the Prince's household as companions or schoolfellows, among whom were probably the young William Montacute, son of the first Earl of Salisbury, and Roger Mortimer, later known as the second Earl of March. Simon Burley, a son of Sir

John Burley, a near kinsman of the Doctor's, who was six years younger than the Prince, joined this fraternity at a later date ; but so close was the companionship throughout life between Simon Burley and the Prince, that Simon became a Knight of the Garter and later the tutor of Prince Edward's own son, Richard of Bordeaux, better known as Richard II.

The training that the young Prince received was very similar to that of all young noblemen of the day as described by the rhyming chronicler, John Hardyng.

“And as lordes sonnes bene sette, at four yere age,
To scole to lerne the doctryne of lettüre,
And after at sex to have thaym in language,
And sitte at mete semely in alle nurture ;
At ten and twelve to revelle in thair cure,
To daunse and synge, and speke of gentelnesse ;
At fourtene yere they shalle to felde I sure,
At hunte the dere, and catch an hardynesse.

For dere to hunte and slea, and se them blede,
Ane hardyment gyffith to his corage,
And also in his wytte he takyth hede
Ymagynynge to take thaym at avauntage.
At sextene yere to werray and to wage,
To juste and ryde, and castels to assayle,
To scarmyse als, and make sykyr courage,
And sette his wache for perile nocturnayle ;

And every day his armure to assay
In fete of armes with some of his meyne,
His might to preve, and what that he do may
Iff that he were in suche a jupertee
Of werre by falle, that by necessite
He might algates with wapyns hym defende :
Thus should he lerne in his priorite
His wapyns alle in armes to dispende.”

Tradition says that the young Prince was among the first of those who attended as students at Queen's College, Oxford, and there still exists in the college a picture of the room he was supposed to have occupied. Be this as it may, it is certain that like the boys of their day the Prince and his companions acquired a working knowledge of Latin and a slight acquaintance with the elements of theology, law, and the science of the age : further, they had to wade through the mysteries of logic as constructed by the Schoolmen. Their instructor was famous through France, Spain, Italy, and Germany for his hundred and thirty treatises on Aristotle, his book on the Ethics, and his *Tractatus de Materia*. But doubtless their young minds thirsted for some more entertaining form of knowledge which might appeal to their quick imagination.

The material was at hand. Chaucer, it is true, had not yet struck his lyre. But there was poetry already in abundance. The literature of Prince Edward's youth, alike in cottage and in hall, was in one shape or other the long French romance, the cycle of tales built round the great names of ancient history, Alisaunder, Charlemagne, or the Celtic Arthur.

The youth and manhood of England in Prince Edward's day were fascinated by the rhymes of King Horn or Sir Tristram, full of colour and fancy, with a length and a minute description of outer things which implied an ample leisure, and with a vague, unreal touch of the world of the soul. What could better appeal to a boy's mind than tales of war and adventure—tales

woven round the great names of the past, full of glamour and fantasy, when the perfect knight rides forth, with the Church's blessing, to win honour and a fair lady, strengthened in his purpose by the mystic story of the Holy Grail? Like his father, and his great-grandfather before him, the spirit of the Arthurian legend was to permeate the soul of the young Prince. The knight errant was to be his ideal, and from his boyhood onwards he was to govern his life by the accolades' oath, "Sir, I that desire to receive the order of Knighthood, swear before God, and the holy book, that I will not fight against his Majesty, who now bestoweth the order of Knighthood upon me. I swear to maintain and defend all Ladies, Gentlewomen, widows and orphans: and I shall shun no adventures of my person in any war where I shall happen to be."

Dr. Walter Burley might be the official tutor of the Prince, but he was a man of peace and learning, and his influence on such a character could not be great or permanent. A young Plantagenet who looked to learning merely as a means for feeding his imagination, and to whose mind peace was but an opportunity for practising war, was bound to seek an instructor who could command his obedience, not by authority, but by personality. Such an one there was in the Queen's own household, a young Knight of Hainault, Sir Walter de Manny. Sir Walter had originally come to England in Philippa's train at the time of her marriage, and he had remained to attend on her and to carve for her. But the young Hainaulter's fiery spirit and lion courage

soon brought him to the front, and as Froissart quaintly says, "he performed afterwards so many gallant deeds of arms in such various places, that they are not to be counted." From the day when at Cadsand, alone and unaided, he saved his general, the gallant Earl of Derby, Manny's reputation was established. Each skirmish, fray, or foray added fresh lustre to his name. No feat of arms was too great for him, no display of courage too extravagant, and soon his name was as well known through castles and garrisons of the Low Countries and France as at the Court of the King of England. It was seldom that Sir Walter de Manny, after the Channel was once crossed, had to wear the red patch over the right eye, which the gay young blades of England were wont to put on till released by some special feat of arms. A ride from Bordeaux to Calais, in the teeth of the King of France, was for him but a casual frolic. Under his tuition Prince Edward gained that mastery of his weapons, that sympathy with his steed, which won for him an unchallenged position among the best lances of Europe; he became an invincible opponent, not only in battle, surrounded by his faithful staff, but even when disguised in the *mêlée* of the tournament.

The hastilude, or tournament, had ever been under the ban of the Plantagenet kings. Like the race meetings during the Protectorate, and the grand deer-hunts in Scotland in the eighteenth century, jousts were suppressed by Government, because they offered opportunities to the disaffected, to meet and organise under the pretence of pleasure. Further, they led to breaches

of the peace and to quarrels which often ended in private war. Edward III., like his predecessor, again and again reiterated the ordinance forbidding the holding of jousts and tournaments. Between 1330 and 1347 there are eleven of such ordinances extant. But while the King forbade his subjects, he himself held jousts, regarding them as schools of arms for the education of the young lords of England—but schools which needed inspection by the monarch in person. During the youth of the Black Prince scarcely a year passed in which a royal hastilude was not held. The principal Feast days of the Christian Year—Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the Assumption—or the arrival of embassies, or the visits of distinguished strangers, were all seized on by the King as an excuse for holding some extravagant passage of arms. The young Prince would attend these tournaments with joy. As soon as he was old enough he would act as page for the King, or one of the great lords, and would hear talk of war in Scotland, the Low Countries, and France, of bitter fights with the infidels in Spain and Palestine, and of the great deeds of the warriors of the past. He would then see the latest form of armour, the newest trick of the *manège*, and the most approved pass with the lance or sword, and would doubtless practise what he had seen, when the tournament was over, under the strict eye of Sir Walter.

While Dr. Burley and Sir Walter Manny were entrusted with the development of the Prince's mind and body, Queen Philippa herself saw to the nourishment of

his soul. Under his mother's care he early developed a special reverence for the Trinity. It was probably owing to the date of his birth that, instead of choosing for him a particular saint as his patron and guardian, she fixed on the Trinity. Many a pilgrimage he made, even in his youth, to Canterbury, to the shrine of the murdered St. Thomas, in remembrance of whose martyrdom Trinity Sunday was held in the highest estimation during the Middle Ages. There can be little doubt that, judged by the light of his times, the Prince was extremely devout and pious.

"Si bien amot seinte Eglise
De bon coer, et sur toute guise
La très-hauteine Trinité
La feste et la solemnité
Et commencea à sustenir
Très le primer de son venir
Et le sustint toute sa vie
De bon coer, saunz penser envie."

But book learning, the practice of arms, and the study of religion formed, after all, but a comparatively small part of the young Prince's education. Politics and the burden of State very early intruded on his notice. Before he had completed his fifteenth year Prince Edward had had several marriages proposed for him. For Edward III., like many a royal statesman before and after him, relied again and again, ever to find it fail, on the policy of attempting to bind friends and foes by the tie of marriage. In 1331 exigencies of State seemed to demand an alliance with France. The Chancellor, at the bidding of the King, asked the Commons whether

he should treat with the French King by amity or marriage. "The Commons humbly conceived that marriage would be the best way." Edward thereon proposed a union between his infant son and a daughter of Philip VI., the first of the Valois line. In 1337 the French marriage was once again suggested, and formed part of the last attempted peace negotiations which preceded the opening of the Hundred Years' War. In 1338 the French war was inevitable, and England and the Low Countries had a common foe; a marriage was therefore proposed between Prince Edward and Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Brabant. As the war developed and spread in 1342 it was of vital importance to try and win over Flanders to the English cause, and a marriage was considered between Prince Edward and a daughter of the Count of Flanders. In 1344 there was another proposal of a match between Prince Edward and a daughter of the Duke of Brabant, to be followed the next year, again for reasons of State, by the suggestion of an alliance with a daughter of Alphonso, the Brave, of Portugal. No doubt the young Prince took but little interest, even in these later proposals; peace and domestic life had but little place in the scheme he had sketched out for himself, and fate was to decree that when the hour of matrimony at length arrived it was to be brought about, not by reasons of State, but by personal inclination.

Of the actual details of his early life we find but scanty notices in the various chronicles. We know that in 1335 the young Earl of Chester was hastily sent off for security to Nottingham, owing to the scare of a

French invasion, at the time his father was helping Edward Balliol to oust the rightful lord of Scotland. In 1337, soon after he had been created Duke of Cornwall, the Prince had to take his place for the first time in one of those solemn pageants which ever fall to the lot of the heir to the crown. The Pope, Benedict XII., in his exile at Avignon, saw clearly that Europe was on the verge of a great war, and accordingly sent two Cardinals on an embassy to England to attempt to bind Edward to the cause of peace. The Duke of Cornwall, with the Earl of Surrey and the nobility of England, met the Cardinal Ambassadors a mile without the city, and in company with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Winchester, Ely, Chichester, Coventry, and Lichfield, and with the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, escorted them to Westminster, where the King himself received them at the lesser door of the Palace; thereafter in the Painted Chamber they delivered their message. Unhappily the negotiations broke down, and all that could be arranged was a limited truce till March 1, 1338. When the envoys, early in November, were introduced into Parliament, it became clear that "they were more concerned for the King of France, and so not fit to be indifferent composers of matters between the two Kings." For, as the Archbishop of Canterbury pointed out, the assertions of the envoys were "vain, false, and frivolous."

In the next year, 1338, the Hundred Years' War actually began. The French made attacks on Portsmouth in June, and on Southampton in October.

Edward himself determined, on the advice of the great burgher noble, von Artevelde, to lay claim to the crown of France, and to take the offensive, using Flanders as his base of operations. Accordingly, on July 16th, he sailed from Orwell for Flanders, after having appointed Prince Edward Warden of the Kingdom. The Duke of Cornwall was a mere cypher in the hands of the Great Council under the direction of Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury; he was, indeed, but eight years old, yet no meeting of the Council could be held without his presence, and all writs for summoning the Parliament which met on July 26th at Nottingham, and all the measures for protecting the coast from the French privateers, ran in his name and bore his seal. The ill success of the royal diplomacy, the necessities of war, and the failure of his financial schemes kept Edward abroad during the whole of the year 1339. Accordingly the young Warden of the Kingdom had to hold his second Parliament at Westminster on October 13, 1339. The King had written saying: "We have often informed you of the cause of our long stay in Brabant, but still no aid comes to us from our Kingdom, and the stay is grievous to us, and our allies are heavy in their wants, and our messengers of peace, who have stayed with the Cardinals and Council of France, will bring us no offer except that we shall not have a palm's breadth of land in the Kingdom of France." Although England was beginning to feel the strain of war, supplies were given plentifully and ungrudgingly by all classes. But even liberal grants of the tenth sheaf, the tenth fleece of wool,

and the tenth lamb failed to pay the enormous debts which the King had contracted by his policy of buying help from the Holy Roman Emperor.

To keep the Flemish in good temper and to bind them closely to his cause, Edward determined to spend the Christmas of 1339 at Antwerp. The Court was most magnificent, the Queen and her ladies were present, and the numbers were swelled by many German lords. To add to the importance of the event the King sent for the young Duke of Cornwall, who was now in his tenth year. The Prince created a very favourable impression. "His great grace and exact shape made him as acceptable to the ladies as his large and well-proportioned limbs raised a full expectation of his future manhood among the Lords, both of England and Almain." This visit was fraught with great moment for the future career of Prince Edward, for then he met his future friend and counsellor, John Chandos, a young warrior who had greatly distinguished himself in the late campaign, and had been knighted by the King himself as soon as the army had entered French territory. Doubtless under Sir John Chandos' guidance the young Prince visited all the foremost champions of the host, attended the jousts, and spent long evenings listening to the feats of arms of Sir Harry Eam and the other gallants.

The holiday at Antwerp was all too short, and early in 1340 the King's necessities demanded further supplies. A Parliament, summoned by the Prince as Warden, was held at the end of 1339 by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

But in spite of fresh grants by the Parliament it

became evident that the King himself must go over to England to arrange the affairs of the realm and to make fresh preparations for war. Accordingly on February 21, 1340, Edward and his family arrived at Orwell and proceeded to London. The King arranged to his satisfaction with the Commons that he was to have the ninth sheaf, fleece, and lamb, and the ninth of all movables. Moreover, that special wool customs should be his for two years. Thereon, once again, after appointing the Duke of Cornwall Warden of the Kingdom, and nominating the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earls of Lancaster, Warwick, and Huntingdon to be of his Council, on June 22nd he sailed from Orwell to contest with the French the mastery of the sea.

The Duke of Cornwall was at Waltham when he received his father's despatch telling of the battle of Sluys, the first great English naval victory, which was to govern the course of the war for the next thirty years. Late in the year the Warden held a Parliament at Westminster to raise the much-needed supplies. As usual, before the opening of the session the following proclamations were issued in the Prince's name:—

“No count or baron may appear before the Warden armed with his sword; all children of the neighbourhood are forbidden to assemble inside the policies of the palace of Westminster for playing prisoner's base or other indecent games, such as knocking off people's hats or catching hold of them, or preventing people from going about their business.” But this was only the introduction to matters of grave concern, for the con-

stant demands of the King had nearly ruined the country, and there were signs of great unrest, with which the Council felt itself unable to deal, owing to the impoverished state of the country. Accordingly, King Edward, attended only by his Queen and eight members of his military household, secretly left Flanders on November 25, 1341. After a stormy passage of three days the royal party reached London at cock-crow on the morning of November 29th. To the King's extreme disgust, he found in the Tower no guard; the only inhabitants being his children with three servants to look after them. He at once sent to prison the Governor of the Tower, the Lord Mayor of London, and other officials. His wrath fell especially on Stratford, the Archbishop, the head of the Warden's Council. It is clear, however, that the Council was not so much to blame as the King, because the country was so overburdened by the war that the ordinary machinery of State could not be kept going. Still, there is no doubt that the young Prince and his brothers and sisters had run a great risk, as the French privateers of those days were extremely numerous and audacious, and, if they had but guessed the real state of affairs, would have made a bold bid to capture the heir to the crown, and to "waken" the good city of London.

The year 1341 was an uneventful one for Prince Edward, save for the magnificent tournament which the King held in London, in August, to celebrate the birth of his fifth son, Edmund of Langley, born on June 5th of that year.

The King sent notice of this tournament to France, Scotland, Hainault, Brabant, and Flanders, offering a safe conduct, coming and going. Many noble warriors attended the summons, among them William, the young Earl of Hainault, uncle of Prince Edward, and his grand-uncle, John Beaumont of Hainault. The jousts and feasts lasted fifteen days. "And as thus the lords and knights exercised themselves in martial feats, so on the other hand the ladies diverted the whole assembly with their songs and dances."

Meanwhile the war proceeded by fits and starts, and in 1342 it broke out afresh, this time in Brittany, where Edward seized the opportunity of upholding de Montfort as claimant to the ducal throne against the French King's candidate, Charles of Blois. Edward sailed for Brittany on October 5, 1342, and once again left to Prince Edward, his Warden, the thankless task of screwing supplies from Parliament. The campaign in Brittany ended in a fiasco owing to the wet weather, and the consequent great mortality among the horses. On March 2nd, Edward agreed to a truce at Malestroit, and, returning to England, relieved his son of the Wardenship.

By 1343 Prince Edward was fast approaching what, in those days, was considered the age of manhood. We have seen that he had already learned to "daunse and synge and speke of gentelness." He had also, we may be sure, become a votary of the chase, "for dere to hunte and slea and se them blede." He was fast becoming a past-master at jousting and riding. He

had already, during his father's absence, learned, as Warden, the inner workings of the royal Court, and the outlines of the art of government. It was necessary that he should have a greater establishment. Accordingly, on May 12, 1343, in full Parliament, at Westminster, the King created his eldest son Prince of Wales, investing him with a coronet, a gold ring, and a silver rod. Along with the title the King granted him numerous castles and lands, and all debts and arrears of foreign rents due to himself in North and South Wales, together with all victuals, arms, horses, oxen, cows, and other things, in all the castles and lands which he held by the King's grant.

The Prince of Wales had his first opportunity of appearing in his new glory at the rejoicings held at Christmas in honour of the widowed Countess of Montfort and her young son. "All the Christmas holidays there were Tournaments, Running at the Ring, Dancings, Balls, splendid Collations, and Princely Banquets, so that the Countess looked upon the Court of England as another Paradise."

CHAPTER III

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER

MAGNIFICENT as were these fêtes at Christmas, they were to be surpassed in the next year, when the King, among other reasons, perhaps, to celebrate his son's entry on manhood, initiated with great splendour the Order of the Garter.

The foundation of the Order of the Garter was really the Prince of Wales's introduction to public life. This close association of the foremost warriors of England and of Europe could not but make a great impression on his character, coming as it did at a time when he was at his most plastic age. Moreover, many of the associates of the Order of the Garter were, or became, his most intimate companions in arms and his closest friends.

There can be but little doubt that the Round Table of the Arthurian legend suggested the foundation of the Order of the Garter. The idea of the Round Table had been put into practical use as early as the days of Edward I., and even earlier. We read in Hardyng, "Howe syr Roger Mortymer was made earle of Marche

at Kyllingworthe, and set the rounde table of a thousand knyghtes and as many ladyes."

"And in the year M was full then
Two hundred (also sixty) and nyntene,
When syr Roger Mortymer so began
At Kelyngworth the rounde table as was sene,
Of a thousande knyghtes, for discipline
Of younger men, after he could deuyse
Of tournaments and justes to exercise."

Since the ceremony at Kenilworth Round Tables had been held in England and in France, but King Edward's design was to follow more closely the Arthurian precedent and to make his Round Table a permanency. At this time, 1344, writes Froissart, "King Edward of England resolved to rebuild the great castle of Windsor, formerly built and founded by King Arthur, and where was first set up and established the noble Round Table, from whence so many valiant knights and men had issued forth to perform feats of arms and prowess throughout the world. And the said King created an order of Knights to consist of himself, his children and the bravest of his land. They were to be in number forty (really twenty-six), and to be called Knights of the Blue Garter; their feast to be kept and solemnised at Windsor, annually, on St. George's Day."

The first meeting in 1344 was so successful that Edward determined to hasten on the building of the Round Tower at Windsor, which was to contain the Round Table. The Round Tower was built in ten



A ROUND TABLE

AFTER MINIATURE OF THE XIV CENTURY, BIB. NAT., PARIS

Copied by Lacroix Les Arts aux Moyens Ages

months by special command of the King, so that it might be ready by the next St. George's Day.

King Edward was so pleased with the success of his scheme that he proceeded to prepare St. George's Chapel at Windsor as the permanent headquarters of the Order. But the French war occupied his time for the next few years, and it was not until April 23, 1350, that the Chapel was rebuilt and all preparations duly and fitly made. In August, 1348, the King had augmented from eight canons to twelve canons and a custos the old college of Henry I.'s foundation, adding thirteen priests or vicars, making in all twenty-six, the same number as the Knights of the Order. He also provided for twenty-six poor or alms-knights within the foundation. When the Knights of the Order filed into the Chapel, on St. George's Day, 1350, they found twenty-six stalls or "sieges," a stall for each knight with his name and arms emblazoned thereon, while to complete the details according to the legend, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Islip, his enormous figure towering majestic in the glory of full pontificals and pall, received them, and gave to the institution that blessing which is still sacred to the Order. The Archbishop addressed the assembled knights, rehearsing to them the ordinances : how the brotherhood was formed to maintain the cause of Christ ; how the Garter was a symbol of the unity which existed among them as knights, and was bound on the knee of each one of them to warn him that in battle he must never turn his back to the foe ; how the motto was a reminder that a

knight must never do an unworthy action ; while the image of St. George was an instigation to emulate the acts of a hero. He pointed out that the purple of the collar indicated that a knight was the equal of kings ; while the collar, always of the same weight and equal number of rings, was a witness of the bond of faith, of peace, and of unity ; that they were called Companions of the Order as a declaration of their readiness in peace or in war to act with one accord as brethren. Thereafter the Archbishop proceeded to the altar, where he celebrated Mass, and the King and the knights received the Communion, pledging themselves to the service of God, the maintenance of truth, and the resistance of all wrong-doers.

The origin of the symbol of the Garter has always been a vexed question. Based on a fantastic tale of Polydor Virgil, who wrote in 1570, the popular story is that either the Countess of Salisbury, for whom Froissart alleges the King had a romantic passion, or Queen Philippa herself, had, while she was dancing, the misfortune to drop her garter ; that thereon, the King, perceiving the smiles of the courtiers, had gallantly stepped forward and picked up the garter with the words, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," adding that he would cause the garter soon to be held in so high esteem that it would be the desire of every noble to wear it. But, as we have said, this story dates from the sixteenth century.

Another account of the origin of the Garter supposes that Edward, on some occasion, gave his garter as a

signal for battle—but this is mere conjecture. The Archbishop's sermon in 1350 probably gives us the right solution. The garter was an emblem of the tie or union of warlike qualities, while the motto was to suggest the high-mindedness and purity of act and intention of the true knight. The reason for the choice of St. George as the patron saint of the Order is also obscure. Latter-day investigators have decided that St. George was a contractor who sold bad meat to the Imperial army in Cappadocia; but that was not his reputation in the Middle Ages. As early as the Heptarchy, the 23rd of April had been set aside in England for the glory of St. George. His popularity, for he was an Eastern saint, was revived by the Crusaders, and Edward III., no doubt, found him revered as the soldier-saint of Christendom, and for that reason adopted him as the patron of his Order, their protector in the hour of danger, their benefactor in the days of peace.

It seems clear, therefore, that Edward III. instituted the Order as a means of stimulating military zeal, and the desire for glory among his nobles, and of touching the imagination of his people by these magnificent semi-religious pageants, at the moment when he foresaw that his claim to the crown of France must end in a succession of long and wearisome campaigns. The success of the military Orders had been proved in the Crusades by the splendid work of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, and later still, and nearer home, by the

magnificent self-devotion of the Teutonic knights. Edward hoped also to attract to his standard the best blades in Europe, for in the fourteenth century patriotism was still in its infancy, and was considered, by many, a lower virtue than courage and audacity. Consequently we find many a French knight fighting in the ranks of the English armies against his liege lord of France, and feeling no shame for so doing. We must remember also that in the days of Edward III. victory depended in no small degree on the individual ; that tactics were only dimly understood ; that in the pitched battle, as in the frays and forays of small expeditions, the personal valour and prowess, and skill in arms of individual knights was all in all. Anything, therefore, which attracted to his standard knights who were skilled above all others in the use of arms, would, in the opinion of the King and his advisers, strengthen, to an enormous degree, his power of offence. When we remember this we may, perhaps, condone Edward's constant extravagances in the holding of jousts, hastiludes, and tournaments. It may also explain the principle which governed the first nominations to the Garter, which would otherwise at first sight seem strange. For if military merit had alone been the qualification, we would have expected to find included among the Founders the famous names of Sir Reginald Cobham, Sir Walter Manny, the Earls of Hereford, Northampton, and Suffolk.

When we scan the list of the Founders we are at once struck with certain facts. First, the comparative youth

of many of the knights, if we presume that the twenty-six original knights were all chosen in 1344; though we must remember that in the opinion of many historians they were not chosen till 1348. In 1344 the Prince was hardly fourteen. The Earls of Salisbury and March were only sixteen, Sir Hugh Courtenay was eighteen. Eight others were under twenty-three years of age. Secondly, we find that high birth alone was not a postulate for admission. Nine of the Founders were of no special standing among the nobility of England, and were simple knights, or knight bannerets to the end of their days. Lastly, we must note the wonderful discernment shown in the selection; for many of the Founders, though yet little tried in war, were to become household names, not in England only, but all over Western Europe. The conclusion seems to be that the original Founders were chosen, not only for their acknowledged military capacity, but for their prowess, skill at arms, and the promise which they showed to an experienced eye, in the jousts which preceded the institution of the Order. Later, as the Founders died out, the distinguished captains of the age were elected to take their place.

It must have been a proud day for the young Prince of Wales when first, along with these famous lances, he appeared clad in the blue mantle, surcoat, and hood powdered all over with small garters, embroidered with silk and gold, with the mottoes worked thereon, and buckles and pendants of silver gilt; round his leg the blue silk garter with, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*,"

embroidered on it in Cyprus and Soldat gold, full conscious that, young as he was, like his fellow-knights, he owed his companionship not merely to his lofty rank, but to his undoubted skill and prowess in the lists. At Poitiers, and on many another stricken field he must have recalled that day when first he became the sworn companion of his trusty friends, Sir John Chandos, Sir James Audeley, Sir Harry Eam, Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Jean Grailley Captal de Buch, William Montacute Earl of Salisbury, John Lord Lisle, Bartholomew Lord Burghersh, John Lord Mohun of Dunster, his kinsman Sir Thomas Holland, and Sir Nele Loryng.

The festivities at Windsor in 1344 were rudely disturbed by the news that the King of France had put to death the Lord Oliver Clisson, and other knights, whom he suspected of negotiating with the English. Edward, who had been all this time quietly preparing to continue the war, at once summoned a Parliament at Westminster. It assembled on Monday, July 7th, and the young Prince of Wales, for the first time, took his place in it as a peer of the realm. The Lords and Commons with one assent required the King "to end the same war either by battle or honourable peace. And if the King shall attempt the war eftsoons that he do not stay the same at the letters or requests of the Pope, or of any whomsoever, but to end the same by dint of sword." The King agreed to this, and thereon Parliament granted him three-fifteenths on condition that their petitions be granted, and "That the Prince and Sir

Edward Balliol may lie on the North Marches." So the Prince made his first campaign in the north on the border, but the Scots did not desire war, and Balliol's force was merely an army of observation.

The early part of the year 1345 was occupied with vain negotiations for peace and strenuous preparations for war. The Pope sent two cardinals in February, but with no result, for Edward had conclusive proof that from the north of Gascony Philip was meditating an attack on English Aquitaine. The Earl of Derby was despatched to Bordeaux, and the King himself got ready to take the field in Brittany. But first he had to make sure of Flanders. Accordingly on July 3, 1345, he embarked at Sandwich on his ship, the *Catherine*, with the Prince of Wales, leaving his son Lionel as Warden. Froissart tells us the reason of this voyage. "Jacques von Artevelde, the citizen of Ghent, that was so much attached to the King of England, that he would give him the inheritance of Flanders, invest his son the Prince of Wales with it, and make it a duchy instead of an earldom. Upon which account the King was, at this period, about St. John the Baptist's Day, 1345, come to Sluys, with a numerous attendance of barons and knights." He had brought the Prince of Wales with him, in order that von Artevelde's promises might be realised. But the expedition came to nought, the fickle burghers turned against von Artevelde, and when he returned to Ghent did him to death and sacked his house. Thereon the King of England departed from Sluys in great wrath, not only at the murder of his

friend, but because it was all in vain that he had taken the title of King of France, and engaged himself in a war to the death with Philip of Valois ; for feudal ties were too strong for legal arguments, and the theory of the Salic law had prevailed in the minds of the Flemish townsmen. The fate of von Artevelde was doubtless at the moment soon forgotten by the young Prince of Wales, who, rejoicing at his freedom, spent his money so royally that, by the beginning of 1346, he was heavily in debt. Still, at a later date, when he himself had to handle the municipalities of Bordeaux, Angoulême, and the towns of Aquitaine, the fickleness of the men of Ghent was often no doubt before his mind, and the memory of von Artevelde's death should have taught him the worth of municipal gratitude and of popular applause.

CHAPTER IV

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

THE year 1346 marks the beginning of the era of English military predominance on the Continent, which, lasting as it did for thirty years, synchronises with the manhood of Prince Edward of Woodstock. Accordingly this is a suitable point for reviewing the origin and the causes of the great Hundred Years' War, in which he played so conspicuous a part. It is at times somewhat difficult to remember that, from the Norman Conquest to the days of Queen Mary, England was to some extent a Continental Power. True, she lost her Norman possessions in the days of King John, but still she retained considerable territory in Aquitaine. Henry Fitz Empress, Count of Anjou, by his marriage with Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine, the divorced wife of the King of France, had brought to the crown of England a noble heritage in Western France which survived the disastrous reigns of their son and grandson, John and Henry III., and remained, though somewhat curtailed, an important appanage of the English crown up to the reign of Edward III.

At first sight it seems strange that a large part of what we now consider must of necessity be an integral part of the land of the French, should, for so long a time, have remained faithful to its English suzerains. But the reason is very simple ; on studying a map we at once perceive that Aquitaine is a distinct geographical unit. The duchy is a triangle bounded on the west by the sea, on the south by the Pyrenees, and on the east by the mountains of Auvergne. There is only one gap in each of the land frontiers ; at Carcassonne, between the spurs of the Pyrenees and the Auvergne Mountains, and at Poitiers, where the Vienne runs between the northern slopes of the Auvergne and the Bocage. When we remember the difficulties of land transport before the advent of good roads and railways, and the comparative easiness of transport by sea, it is easy to understand that the merchants of Bordeaux and the vine-growers of the valleys of the Garonne basin found a better market for their wares in London than in Paris. A further and very important reason for the preference of the men of Aquitaine for English rather than French rule, was that the English King, being far away, the petty Gascon barons and the big municipalities were left more or less in freedom to manage their own affairs, to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction, it mattered not which, of their tenants and townsmen.

During the latter part of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, the Kings of France had been steadily reaping the results of the far-seeing

policy of Philip Augustus and his successors. They were by now no longer mere rulers of the little Isle of France and the vague suzeraines of Burgundy, Champagne, Normandy, Brittany, and Aquitaine. Over all these provinces, save Aquitaine and Brittany, they were becoming the actual lords. Further, the French people were beginning to recognise their unity, and already we hear the ominous phrases regarding the natural boundaries of the Atlantic, the Pyrenees, and the Rhine, which have proved so attractive to France but so destructive to the peace of Europe. Edward I. had clearly foreseen the expansion of France to the west, and he had prepared against it an elaborate ring of fortified towns called Bastides, to guard the main lines of approach from French aggression. So successful had this ring of fortifications proved that, even during the inglorious reign of Edward II., the French had made but little impression on his transmarine possessions. But the problem of Aquitaine was aggravated by the fact that, in addition to the national and territorial aspirations of the Kings of France, there was a bitter commercial and maritime rivalry between the merchant sailors of Bordeaux and those of the Norman ports. As in England there was often war and plundering forays between the Cinque Ports and the commercial ports of East Anglia, so in France the merchant fleets of Bordeaux would raid and burn the Norman ports, and at times we hear of regular sea-fights between the rival fleets of Aquitaine and Normandy.

In seeking for the real cause of the war, we must

remember how close was the connection in those years between Scotland and France. When Edward I. made his premature attempt to consolidate Great Britain, Scotland, in her extremity, had not far to go to seek an ally and a friend. The King of France was longing to do in Aquitaine what the King of England so earnestly desired to do in Scotland. England would only gain Scotland through France, France could only gain Aquitaine through Scotland. To misquote the old rhyme, the key to the situation lay in this:—

“If that you will Scotland win,
Then with France first begin.”

We see, then, that at the beginning of the reign of Edward III. there were questions at issue between the crowns of England and France which would provide a heavy task for the diplomacy of that day to solve. Edward began his reign by performing punctually his feudal obligations to the French crown, as Duke of Aquitaine. His idea was, by this scrupulous discharge of his feudal duties, to arrive at some compromise whereby he might have a free hand to turn his attention to the absorption of Scotland. But the King of France had no mind to see England expand. Edward's whole policy was rudely upset by a totally unexpected blow. Strained relations had long existed between the manufacturing towns of Flanders and their Count. In North-east France, in Brabant, and Flanders the great industrial towns had practically become small states like the Italian republics. So greatly had their

power increased that, in 1302, the Flemings had not feared to meet the French King, Philip IV., in battle, and had actually defeated and crushed his feudal army at Coutrai. The Flemish Counts always looked to their feudal superior of France for assistance against their turbulent burghers, for the Kings of France hated the pretensions of the growing manufacturing municipalities within their own borders. It was with grim satisfaction that in 1328 Philip VI. avenged the defeat of Coutrai at the battle of Cassel. The Count, in return for the punishment of his self-willed burghers, was only too willing to do what best pleased the King of France, and at Philip's bidding in 1336, when the Scotch war was in full swing, he suddenly arrested all the English merchants in Flanders.

The result of this act was far-reaching, for England was the Australia of those days—the great sheep-breeding country which exported its wool for manufacturing purposes. The action of the Flemish Count had thus a threefold result. For the moment it was a heavy blow to the English breeders, and tended, as the French King desired, to cripple English resources. On the other hand, it stimulated the new woollen industry, since Edward placed an embargo on the export of wool. At the same time it brought to the verge of starvation the great industrial towns of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. The burghers of these towns, and notably Jacques von Artevelde, a Flemish noble who had been enrolled in the Weavers' Guild of Ghent, at once sought to conciliate the English King and to persuade him to

take off the embargo. Edward saw that Philip's action was a declaration of war, and of war to the knife ; that diplomacy had failed disastrously, and peace could only be gained by absorbing France or by humbling her in the dust. Accordingly, at Jacques von Artevelde's suggestion, he assumed the title of King of France, in order to stifle any qualms of conscience on the part of the ignorant peasantry, greedy burghers, or renegade nobles.

Edward's claim to the French crown was based on the fact that, through his mother Isabella, daughter of Philip IV., he was the nearest male descendant of Philip IV., whose three sons had all died childless as Kings of France. The King of Navarre had even better claim to the French crown than Edward, being descended in the direct line (also through a daughter) from Philip III. But the French people desired a Frenchman, and not a King of England or a King of Navarre, as their sovereign ; accordingly they had invented the Salic law to bar all descendants through females, and had elected as king Philip of Valois, a descendant of Louis IX.

“ There is no bar
To make against your highness' claim to France,
But that which they produce from Pharamond,—
In terram Salicam mulieres ne succedant,
' No woman shall succeed in Salique land' :
Which Salique land the French unjustly gloze
To be the realm of France, and Pharamond
The founder of this law and female bar.
Yet their own authors faithfully affirm,
That the land Salique is in Germany,
Between the floods of Saala and of Elbe.”

Edward, foreshadowing the diplomacy of modern Europe, at once proceeded to make alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor, and his great feudatories of the "German Empire." The first campaigns, during the years 1338-40, were fought in Flanders to cover the great commercial towns of the Low Countries. They brought the English neither success nor glory, for Philip VI. knew he had little to gain and all to lose by a battle. Edward indeed suffered both materially and morally: he piled up a heavy load of debt and gained an unenviable character for repudiating his plighted word. From 1340 to 1342 there came a truce. But in 1342, as we have seen, the opportunity for striking at France through Brittany, owing to the dispute regarding the ducal crown, was too strong for Edward to resist. The Breton campaign came to an end early in 1343, owing to the fact that neither side could gain much advantage, and that, under the Pope's good offices, hopes of a permanent settlement had appeared. But these hopes soon were seen to be illusory; the English distrusted Clement as a French partisan, and the truce was brought to an abrupt conclusion by the King of France breaking the pledges he had given at Malestroit, by imprisoning John of Montfort and beheading his most prominent partisans.

Edward at first contemplated pursuing his old line of operations, using Flanders as a base, but the murder of Jacques von Artevelde completely altered the situation in the Low Countries, and the danger to Aquitaine and the struggle for Brittany caused him to turn his atten-

tion to new combinations. In Brittany the Celtic party of de Montfort formed a solid basis on which to work, and there an English force under Sir Thomas Dagworth met with some considerable success. Edward, however, determined to make his greatest effort in Guienne. Thither, in 1345, he sent Henry of Grosmont, Early of Derby, the eldest son of the Earl of Lancaster. Derby was accompanied by a large body of English knights, men-at-arms, and archers, in all about three thousand troops. Safe behind the ring of Bastides he organised a strong Gascon force, and during the next eighteen months he made three successful raids into the heart of the French territory. So menacing did the position of the Earl of Derby seem to Philip of Valois that, early in 1346, he despatched against him his son John, Duke of Normandy, with the flower of the French nobility. Before them Derby had to withdraw towards his base, and eventually retired behind the line of the Dordogne. Such was the position of affairs on the Continent at the commencement of 1346, when Edward determined once again to go in person to the seat of war, and to take with him the Prince of Wales, now sixteen years old.

Before embarking on the campaign it will be useful to obtain a proper understanding of the weapon which King Edward and the Prince of Wales were about to use against the crown of France. The Norman kings, on their conquest of England, had found existing in the country a military system by which every one was bound to serve in the fyrd, or national levy, in the event of the

country being in danger. They allowed this organisation to decay, and introduced a custom of service based on the tenure of land. Under this system the tenant was bound to follow his lord to the field for forty days in each year, if so required. But the feudal levy was never successful in England, and as early as the reign of Henry II. recourse was had to the old fyrd system, whereby each man was bound, according to his position and wealth, to provide himself with weapons, and in some cases with armour, and to hold himself in readiness in a national emergency. But though the feudal levy, backed by the fyrd, might answer for defence, it was obviously ill-suited for long foreign wars. Consequently the Plantagenet kings when fighting abroad generally preferred to take scutage instead of service from the baronage, and to demand aids and grants rather than to call out the fyrd: with the money thus raised they paid their own bodyguard and hired mercenaries who were usually Flemings.

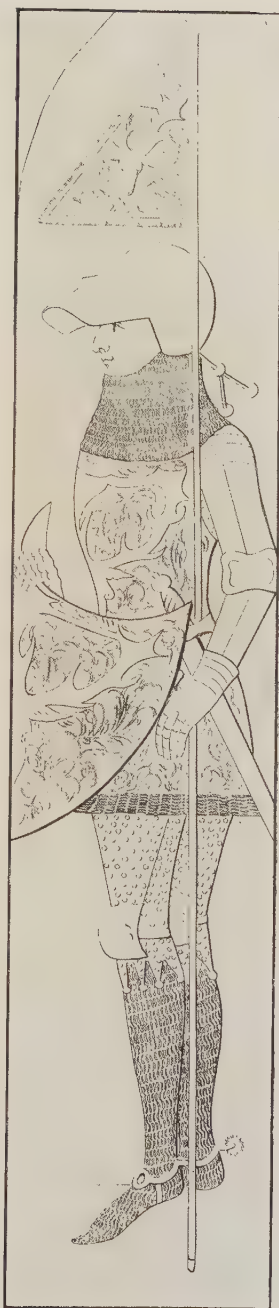
Edward I. had great difficulty in raising his armies to invade France. The heavy cavalry, which was drawn from the feudal baronage, was ill-disciplined and unmanageable, and its leaders refused to serve abroad unless they were accompanied by the King. The King tried to coerce them, and the Earl Marshal refused point blank to serve abroad without his liege lord, the King. "By God, sir Earl, you shall either go or hang!" said the King in wrath. "By that same oath, sir King, I will neither go nor hang," quoth the Earl; and the King, knowing his position was untenable, had to give in. To

meet this situation Edward I. was driven back on the fyrd, which he reorganised completely. It was the fyrd which he used to conquer Scotland, but which broke in pieces under Edward II.'s unskilful hand at Bannockburn.

With Edward II. a new device was tried, which, as continued and expanded by Edward III. and the Black Prince, laid the foundation of the modern regimental system. The King made contracts, or, as they were called, indents, with men of means, whereby these contractors bound themselves to serve him with a fixed strength for a fixed term at a fixed rate of wages. This system differed from the older one of hiring mercenaries simply in this—that the hired men were now Englishmen, not foreigners ; hence the force thus raised assumed a national character. Further, as the contractor naturally raised men in the district in which he himself resided, the companies thus raised soon gained the *esprit de corps* of a territorial force. Organisation was still in its infancy ; each contractor raised a force of all arms, and was absolutely responsible for the interior economy, clothing, equipment, &c., of his own corps ; in fact he had very much the powers and obligations which colonels of regiments possessed until quite recent times. When peace came the contractor, not unnaturally, was often glad to sell the service of his troops to the highest bidder ; hence arose the famous condottiere, or Free Companies, so intimately connected with the names of Sir Hugh Calverly, Sir John Hawkwood, and others.



SAINT EUSTACE



SAINT MERCURE

TO ILLUSTRATE THE ARMOUR OF KNIGHTS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE XIV CENTURY. AFTER A
Fresco BETWEEN THE PIERS OF THE WINDOWS OF ST. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL, WESTMINSTER

The composition of the English armies at the beginning of the Hundred Years' War was very similar to that of the armies of other European nations; but under Edward I.'s careful tuition, the long-bow had become the distinctive national weapon. In the opinion of the day the men-at-arms, or heavy cavalry, were the most important factor of the army. The men-at-arms were drawn mainly from the wealthy classes, and were composed of knights and squires and *servientes equites*. The *servientes* (whence comes the modern sergeant) corresponded to the French *bachelier* (*bas chevalier*); they were the sons and the serving-men of the great vassals, and were, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, almost of greater importance in the English army than the more noble but more self-willed, self-seeking, and often disobedient knights. The tendency of the day, owing to the increasing penetrative power of the long-bow and cross-bow, was to add more and more to the weight and thickness of the defensive armour of the man-at-arms and his horse. The consequence was that only the most powerful stallions of Spanish breed were equal to the task of carrying a man-at-arms in battle. Strange as it may seem, the men-at-arms were often very inferior riders; we know, indeed, that on occasions they had to be tied into their saddles. Owing to their indifferent horsemanship, to the weak bits employed, and to the weight of their defensive armour they could scarcely turn their horses at the gallop; they were compelled either to move slowly and guide their horses, or to gallop straight ahead as long

as their horses were able, or chose, to proceed. The chief offensive weapons of the men-at-arms were the lance, the sword, and the dagger. The tactical distribution of the men-at-arms consisted of a solid mass with a depth of about the same length as the frontage. When attacking, the ranks and files were closed as tightly as possible, and the heavy column moved forward at a slow trot. This is the reason why really good infantry could beat off a charge of men-at-arms, for unless made in disorder there was practically no shock action about a mediæval charge. Consequently the English, who were deficient in men-at-arms, as compared with the French, preferred to dismount their heavy cavalry, and, aided by their archers, to resist the assault of the French columns in a good defensive position.

The medium and the light cavalry were composed of paucenars, who wore a sleeveless coat of chain mail and carried a lance, and of hobelars, or men mounted on small cobs equipped with a heavy padded doublet, an iron helmet, gloves, and sword.

The infantry proper was composed of Welsh spearmen and archers. The spearmen were the first troops in England to receive a distinctive uniform, composed of a tunic and mantle: they carried nothing save a spear. The archers wore an iron cap and carried only a bow. The bow was six feet four inches long; the arrow had an iron barb and point and was fledged with goose or peacock feathers. The extreme effective range of the long-bow was two hundred and forty yards. It

was scarcely inferior in this respect to the cross-bow, and it was immensely superior to it in rapidity of fire, and in the fact that an equal number of long-bowmen required a much smaller front than a similar number of cross-bowmen. The strength of the English army depended on the fire tactics of the archers, and so evident was this that, as the war went on, the English leaders began to mount their archers; thus they secured increased mobility for their most important arm. The rapidity of the fire and the penetration of the arrow were so great that the bowmen could take all the sting out of the slow-moving dense mass of attacking men-at-arms.

When we remember that the purchasing power of money of that day was about twenty times the purchasing power of the money of to-day, we see that the English army of the time of Edward III. was well paid. The Prince of Wales received twenty-five shillings per diem, an earl got six shillings and eightpence, a knight two shillings, a sergeant one shilling, a mounted archer, paucenar, or hobelar sixpence, a foot archer threepence, and a Welsh spearman twopence.

Preparations for the campaign of 1346 were begun in the autumn of 1345. As early as the 9th of October, 1345, writs were issued calling out levies; ships were commandeered to carry troops; criminals were pardoned on condition of enlisting. Among others to whom writs were sent, the Prince of Wales was ordered to collect four thousand Welsh troops, half of whom were to be spearmen and half bowmen, and to proceed

to Portsmouth. But it was found inexpedient to attempt a winter campaign, and accordingly these preparations were counter-ordered. Fresh writs for the summoning and the marshalling of the army were issued in January, 1346, giving the rendezvous for Portsmouth, in Mid-Lent. These orders were again countermanded on account of "horrid tempests," and early in March writs were issued fixing the date of assembly for the Quindene of Easter. The result of the constant changes of date was that false rumours were rife throughout the country, and every shire swarmed with disbanded soldiers. The King had to make known that all persons guilty of misconduct, or pillaging, and of spreading rumours likely to inculcate depression, would be punished according to law. To give a feeling of security, elaborate preparations were made for a system of beacon fires, and the fyrd of maritime counties was organised for defence.

By the 25th of June preparations were at last complete. Prince Lionel had been appointed Warden of the Kingdom, and the King was ready to start. The Prince of Wales had arrived at Portsmouth with three thousand five hundred Welshmen, half armed as spearmen and half as bowmen, and fifty archers from the county of Chester, as the latest writ had commanded him. In raising and equipping this force he had spared no expense. What with the claims of his troops during the winter and the lavish way in which he had maintained his military household, like many another soldier he started on his first campaign heavily in debt. To

afford him the opportunity of further borrowing the King had to issue a writ empowering the Prince's creditors to attach and hold for a term of years his lands, and to seize his movables in the event of his death during the campaign. Moreover, to meet the constant demands of his creditors, the Prince had to put the screw on to his tenants in Wales, Cornwall, and Chester. So complicated and difficult was his financial position that between July, 1346, and January, 1348, the steward of his household had to write no less than eight hundred and sixteen letters regarding the collection of his revenue.

But at the age of sixteen, on the commencement of his first campaign, these sordid money details were not likely to weigh heavily on Prince Edward. There was much else of greater interest passing daily before his eyes. King Edward had collected and equipped a force that was probably superior to any expedition which left the shores of England until the last years of the nineteenth century. All that was best and bravest of the nobility of England had found their way to Portsmouth. The war fever was at its height in the country; the levies of the shires and of the towns were relatively so small that they were, in fact, all picked men. For the first time the departmental corps was properly organised. We find that forty expert miners were summoned from the Forest of Dean; that Andrew le Fèvre, of the Tower, accompanied by twelve master-smiths and their artificers, were embarked with the force. The muster roll of Calais shows that during

that part of the campaign, at any rate, there were present with the army numerous masons, carpenters, smiths, engineers, miners, and gunners. The Italian chronicler, Villani, maintains that five guns were embarked with the expedition, but it seems highly improbable that the guns of that age were mobile enough to accompany such an expedition—they were probably brought straight to Calais by sea. We know that, as early as 1344, King Edward actually did possess artillery, as we find among his military stores saltpetre and sulphur for the manufacture of powder, and among his men six “gonners.”

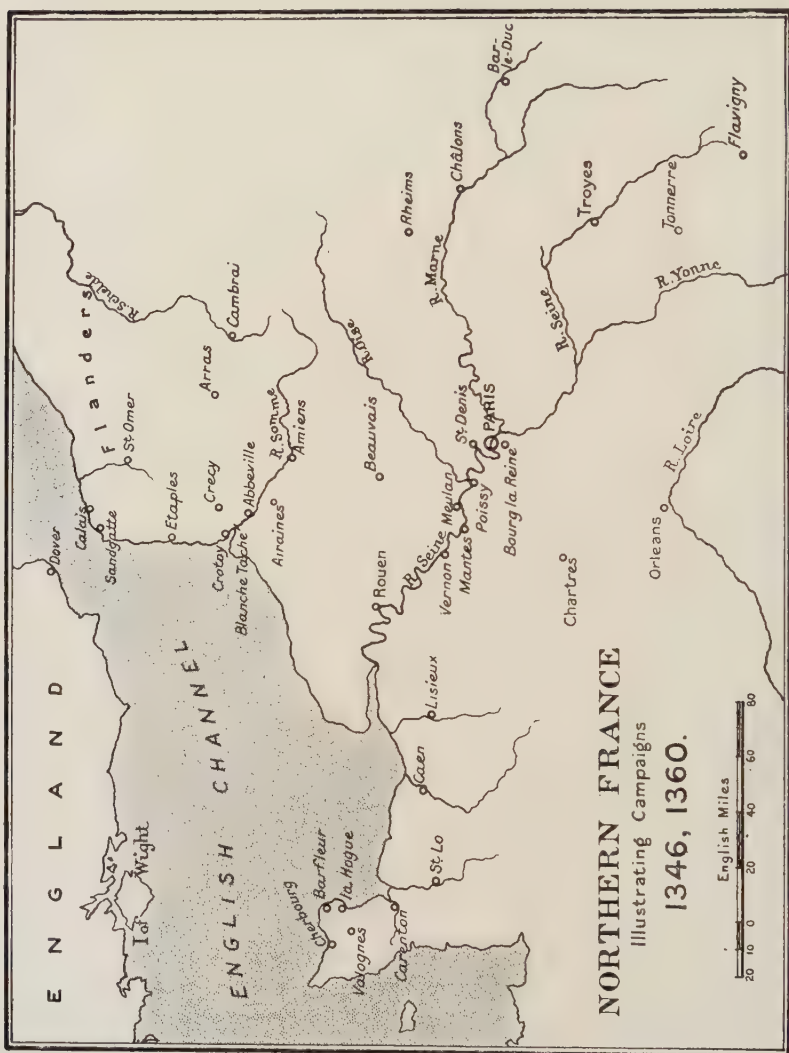
CHAPTER V

THE CAMPAIGN IN NORMANDY

MATTERS of State and contrary winds kept the fleet off the Isle of Wight till July 11th. The master mariners of the various ships received no orders as to their destination, nor was a rendezvous appointed in case of a storm, but they were simply required to follow the King's admiral. Many were the speculations as to their destination, but the King and his staff kept their counsel well. Probably Edward had originally determined to neglect Brittany and push on to Guienne, there to help the Earl of Derby against Philip's son, John Duke of Normandy. But during their enforced inaction off the Isle of Wight, he listened to the advice of Godfrey of Harcourt, a renegade Norman noble, who pointed out that Normandy was absolutely defenceless, that it was extremely rich, and at the moment the harvest had just been gathered in; that even if the wind held in the south-west it was still possible to make the Cotentin; moreover, that a successful raid into Normandy would relieve the pressure on Guienne, and that it might even be possible to threaten Paris itself. The

hope of plenty of plunder and the chance of penetrating as far as Paris operated powerfully on the mind of the King; but Harcourt had a still stronger argument at his disposal, namely, that two years previously the Normans had spontaneously made an offer to the King of France to furnish an expedition to conquer England, like the great duke's expedition three hundred years earlier. It was doubtless the desire to punish this piece of insolence that decided Edward to divert his expedition to Normandy. It was no mere idle tale of Count Godfrey, for after the capture of Caen the actual documents of this gratuitous offer were found among the town records, and were sent in bitter derision by King Edward to the Archbishop of Canterbury to be published abroad throughout the kingdom.

The expedition, then, finally set sail on July 11th. The wind was favourable, and on the following morning the English made the Norman coast at St. Vast de la Hogue, in the Cotentin. A landing was easily effected, and the local levies were quickly brushed aside by a force under the young Earl of Salisbury. Amid great enthusiasm, on a hill near the harbour, before the troops already landed and in sight of the fleet, the King reknighthed the young Prince of Wales, with the double object of raising the enthusiasm of the troops and of being able to claim the legal feudal aid. Along with the Prince the King knighted the Earl of Salisbury, Roger Lord Mortimer, Lord Roos, and many other young nobles.



Our authorities for the route taken by the English expedition are the official despatches of the King's clerk, Michael of Northborough, and the King's Kitchen Accounts, which record the places where the King stopped each night, and give the dates. The expeditionary force seems to have been just under twenty thousand strong. Of this, seven thousand were mounted men, four thousand three hundred were bowmen, and seven thousand were Welsh spearmen. It took six days to disembark the whole force. Meanwhile the King was not idle. On July 14th a light column was despatched to seize and sack Barfleur and penetrate as far as Cherbourg, while the country around la Hogue, or Hogges, as the English called it, was systematically ravaged, and a large stock of provision was collected for the march.

It is an accepted axiom of strategy that "to move swiftly, strike vigorously, and secure all the fruits of victory is the secret of successful war." But in the fourteenth century war, as an art, was but in its rudimentary stage: it was the sport of kings, a pleasure not a pain, a thing to be dallied over, not to be forced at all costs to a hurried conclusion. Edward, by his unexpected landing in the Cotentin, had perhaps unconsciously stumbled on one of the great secrets of successful war. He had mystified his enemy, and had forced him to give up the initiative and to reshape his plans to meet a new emergency. As soon as King Philip heard of the appearance of the English force in Normandy he at once stopped all reinforcements which

he had intended for Aquitaine. To have gained the full benefit of the surprise Edward ought to have pushed on with the utmost speed through Normandy, and, if possible, he should have attempted to reach Paris before that city could be victualled for a siege. Instead of doing so he advanced in a leisurely manner, plundering and burning by the way.

The main body of the army to which the Prince of Wales was attached left St. Vast on July 18th. A mediæval army moved slowly, and six miles a day was the average march. Pillaging was the order of the day. The King and the Prince of Wales rode with the main column; while on the left one marshal, the Earl of Warwick, kept touch with the fleet; and on the right the other marshal, Count Godfrey of Harcourt, with a column of five hundred men-at-arms and two thousand archers, moved at a distance of six or seven leagues from the main force, burning and devastating the country. The main body was divided into three "battles," the vaward commanded by the Prince, the centre by the King, and the rear by the Bishop of Durham. "They found the country very rich, with plenty of everything, the barns full of wheat and the houses full of riches, with many wealthy burgesses, carts and waggons, horses, pigs, sheep and the finest oxen in the world, which were bred in the country. And they took at their will all they wanted, and carried it to the King's army: but the common soldiers never gave up to the King the gold and silver which they had found."

It was not till Wednesday, July 26th, nearly a fortnight since the landing was first effected, that the English met with any real opposition. On that day the army arrived at Caen, at the hour of noon, and heard that there was a large body of men-at-arms within the town. On the day previously the terms offered by the King had been contemptuously rejected, and a fight was imminent. So far the young Prince, in command of the advance-guard of the centre column, had taken but little part in the plundering forays and the small skirmishes which had marked the English advance through Normandy ; his duties had consisted of summoning towns which instantly capitulated, and of repairing bridges, broken down by the enemy in their flight. But at Caen, "a city larger than any English town outside London," the Norman militia and the feudal levies of Northern France were collected under the Constable of France, the Count of Eu, and the Chamberlain, the Count of Tankerville. The castle was strongly held by three hundred Genoese bowmen, while the Counts occupied the town with a strong force of men-at-arms. The abbey (in one of which William the Conqueror lay buried) had been evacuated, and all that part of the town which lay on the west side of the river Orne, at once fell into the hands of the advance-guard under the command of the Prince.

The English, without waiting for orders, attacked the bridge which spanned the river. It had been strengthened by palisading and barriers, and the French defended it bravely. So stout was the resistance that

at one moment Edward actually sent forward the Earl of Warwick to order the archers to retire ; but on reaching the front Warwick disobeyed his orders and entered the *mêlée*. Thereon the King, with Prince Edward and his staff, rode forward and themselves joined the fray. The presence of the King and the Prince had such a stimulating effect that the bridge-head was forced and an entrance made into the town. The Prince especially distinguished himself in this assault, being eager to make his name in his first battle.

The Constable and Chamberlain were taken prisoners, the Chamberlain by a knight of the Prince's household, together with one hundred of their knights and about one hundred and forty esquires. A great number of knights and esquires and men of the town were killed in the streets and houses and gardens. It was impossible to count the number of those of importance, because they were so stripped and despoiled they could not be recognised. "Amongst our people no gentleman was killed, except an esquire, who was wounded and died two days afterwards."

Although the casualties among the English cavalry were thus light, the unarmed archers and spearmen suffered heavily in the street fighting which followed the capture of the bridge : "For the inhabitants mounted into the upper stories of the narrow streets and threw down stones and benches and 'mortiers,' by which on the first day five hundred were maimed or killed. In consequence of this the King was so incensed

that he ordered that on the next day the town should be burnt and all put to the sword." The evil spirit of the Angevin race had once again overclouded the King's better judgment. Fortunately for the fair name of the English arms more moderate counsels prevailed ; not, however, before the inhabitants had suffered considerably at the hands of the English, who, greatly demoralised by a fortnight of plundering, were in danger of losing their soldierly qualities ; as we can see by the fact that the attack on the bridge failed at first for want of dash. Discipline was severely sapped, and Sir Thomas Holland, the first husband of the Prince's future wife, the Fair Maid of Kent, had great difficulty in enforcing obedience as he rode through the streets.

The career of Prince Edward of Woodstock, the mirror of chivalry, the proud representative of English knighthood, opens with the sack of Caen and ends with the sack of Limoges. In each case the savage temper of the Plantagenets was largely to blame for these wanton acts. Once the King had sanctioned licence, it was no wonder that the soldiers could not be restrained. The English army contained very many fighting men drawn from Wales and the border counties, where plundering forays were a daily experience. Moreover, the force was composed of units hastily raised and drawn from divergent sources ; not of regularly disciplined troops, as it was in the latter years of the war. Military law and discipline were still in their infancy. After the severe check they received at the

commencement of the engagement, such troops naturally got completely out of hand.

Much as we shudder at the deliberate destruction which marked the progress of the English army through France, we must remember that Edward was only waging war according to the accepted ideas of his time. The science of war was unthought of in the fourteenth century, and even as late as the eighteenth century the true principles were but dimly grasped, save by the great genius of Marlborough. Only lately has it become recognised that the simplest and most direct way of conquering a country is to defeat the armed forces of that country in the field; experience, moreover, shows that this method is only effectual in highly organised countries where all forms of government and administration are centralised. Accordingly, in olden times, generals sought to cripple their foes in other ways. The history of the Hundred Years' War is, from one point of view, an example of how impossible it is to conquer a large country by mere devastating raids. But Edward and his advisers were firmly convinced that the best possible means of bringing the French monarch to his knees was by harrying his lands, and by so tormenting his people that they would be glad to exchange their allegiance and seek safety with their enemies. This was their definite plan of action; the systematic ravaging of the country was excusable in their eyes, as it was carried out not for mere lust and cruelty, but for a definite end. It was one of the unfortunate paradoxes of the fourteenth century that in peace all training was

spent in perfecting the individual in the knightly science of arms, but in war reliance was too often placed on the mere instinctive acts of the freebooter.

By sending back his fleet after the capture of Caen, King Edward cut himself off from his base. It is extremely difficult to gauge what his intentions were. He had relieved his army of the immense trains of plunder which had hitherto encumbered it and protracted its march, and no doubt he had a much better chance of restoring discipline now that the soldiers were separated from their spoil. But the question of his real intentions has never been solved. It may have been that he wanted to cross the Seine to join hands with his allies in Flanders. Froissart offers another explanation; he says that one of the arguments of Count Godfrey, whereby he saved the people of Caen, was, "Dear Sir, restrain your courage a little and be satisfied with what you have done. You have yet a long journey before you get to Calais, where you intend to go." This seems to show that Edward had, very early in the campaign, given up the idea of capturing the capital. If this is the case, the advance on Paris was entirely unpremeditated. It arose from the fact that the French in their distress had broken down all the bridges over the Seine. Edward, finding how complete was their demoralisation, marched out of bravado right up to Paris, instead of forcing a passage lower down the river. The importance attached to Calais arose from the fact that it was the great naval port from which the French privateers issued to harry the south coast

of England. Moreover, in the opinion of soldiers and sailors of that day, the possession of Calais was of paramount importance, and set the seal to the English claims of the ownership of the narrow seas. It was to take centuries to teach naval and military authorities that the mere command of strategic points does not mean naval predominance.

The army left Caen on July 31st. The King's intention was to effect a crossing of the Seine—if possible, at Rouen. Accordingly he made no attack on fortified towns, "for he wished to spare his men and artillery"—that is, his archers. At Lisieux he was met by two cardinals, who offered him, from the King of France, the duchy of Aquitaine—as his father had held it—if he would make peace. But King Edward was aiming at the crown of France, and knew that Aquitaine was his for the taking. Louviers was next plundered, "a rich market town where a great quantity of cloth was made." Rouen was strongly held by a brother of Sir Godfrey Harcourt and the Count of Evreux. Accordingly the King turned southwards, burning Vernon and Pont de l'Arche, where he found all the bridges destroyed. In spite of opposition he seized Mantes, and at last, on August 13th, arrived at Poissy. "This bridge was also broken, but the piles were still standing. The King remained three days here until the bridge was repaired so that his army could pass without danger." During the halt the Prince of Wales and the marshals advanced up to Paris and burnt St. Germain en Laye and Montjoie, St. Cloud, Boulogne near Paris, and

Bourg la Reine. "The people of Paris were in great fright, for the town was not completely enclosed, and they were afraid lest the English might take it."

So far the French monarch had been obliged to act on the defensive, for the bulk of the feudal nobility was still on its return march from Guienne. Day by day, however, his force was becoming stronger. While Edward was at Poissy, hurrying on the repair of the bridge, Philip was in Paris quieting the distracted town-folk. The city was in uproar. "Where is the King, where the army? Why do the King, the army, not fight and save us? save the blazing towns yonder? are not the terrible English at the gates? To arms! break down the bridges, barricade the streets." But Philip knew that the hour of action was fast approaching. The army of Guienne was rapidly massing round Paris. Reinforcements arrived from many quarters, headed by the Lord John of Hainault, the Duke of Lorraine, the Count of Flanders, the Count of Blois, and the King of Bohemia, whose son had but recently been elected King of the Romans. On August 14th the King of France, "a very hasty man," without sign or warning, suddenly rode forth from Paris to Saint Denys, where his host was assembling, and indited a despatch to Edward, offering him battle on one of five given days, between St. Germain and Vaugirad, or between Francheville and Pontoise.

Edward received this despatch at the moment his army was defiling over the hastily repaired bridge at Poissy. He had just escaped from one trap, and he

had no intention of walking into another. He accordingly sent a misleading message in reply, and at once pushed forward in a northerly direction, with the intention of crossing the Somme before his retreat could be cut off. The retirement was made with great expedition; the main body of the army, which passed by Pontiose, Auteuil, and Poix to Araines, averaging about twelve miles a day. The country through which the army passed was, of course, devastated and burned.

“Mes les Englois, pour eux esbattre
Mistrat tout en feu et à flame
La firent mainte veufe dames
Et maint povre enfant orphanyn
Tant chivacherent soir et main.”

But discipline was now much stricter. Some marauders set fire to the Abbey of St. Lucien, near Beauvais, and the King seized the opportunity of making an example. “He stopped his march, saying that those who had done this outrage should pay dearly for it, for he had forbidden any one, on pain of death, to destroy churches or abbeys. He therefore took twenty of those who had set fire to the Abbey and ordered them to be hanged at once, as an example and warning to the others.”

Amiens was reached by August 21st. The English had marched seventy miles in six days, but in spite of this they had not shaken off the French pursuit, and scouts brought in news that all the bridges of the Somme had been destroyed. During the 21st and 22nd the marshals, with two light columns, patrolled

the river, trying to effect a crossing, but with no success.

King Edward had every cause to be anxious, for the French army was more than double the size of his force ; and it completely closed the mouth of the trap into which he had been driven. The English were, in fact, in a sort of cul-de-sac in the shape of a triangle, the two sides being the river Somme and the sea, and the base the French army. There were only two courses open—either to turn and fight the French, with no possible means of escape if defeated, or to move further into the cul-de-sac, hoping to find some means of escaping from the snare. But a general has to conceal his true feelings from his men, and so the King addressed them : “Gentlemen, be not dismayed, for we have passed through many perils with the help of God, and I am persuaded that God, our Lady, and St. George will find us a passage.”

On the 23rd the English withdrew thirteen miles north to Acheux. The King of France was jubilant. All the bridges of the Somme were broken down. The only ford at Blanche Tache in the tidal water was strongly held by Sir Godemar de Fay, with a force of six thousand, including one thousand men-at-arms and many Genoese bowmen. But Edward was not likely to acquiesce in the seeming adverse judgment of fortune. At Oisement, thanks to the offer of huge bribes, which the captive knights and common soldiers of France had the dignity to refuse, a peasant, one Gobin Agace, came forward. He informed the King that he could show him a safe passage, where at low

tide "his men could cross twelve abreast with the water not above their knees." After a sleepless night, in the early hours of the morning the English force was put in motion, and shortly before daybreak, with its long train of sumpter horses and wagons, it reached the ford, only to find that the tide was full. The situation was critical in the extreme. No attempt could be made to cross till the tide fell, and as daylight increased Sir Godemar de Fay and his six thousand men were seen ready to oppose the crossing. Meanwhile, at any moment, the French army might come in contact with the rear.

King Edward made his dispositions carefully and well. The English archers lined the banks of the river, ready to cover the advance of a picked body of one hundred men-at-arms under the Earl of Northampton and Lord Reginald Cobham. The Prince of Wales was to command the supports close in their rear. The King himself remained with the main body, ready at any moment to reinforce the rear-guard in the event of the appearance of the French army. At last the tide fell and the ford was practicable. "The two Marshals advanced, with their banners displayed, to the cry of 'Dieu et Saint George,' and those who fought in the water were the most gallant, and the best mounted were placed in front. Sir Godemar and his people defended the passage valiantly, and many men were overthrown into the water on both sides, for he had with him picked warriors and Genoese who did much harm to the English by their shooting:

but the English archers shot their arrows so steadily and compactly it was a marvel to behold them, and after a time the French gave way and the men-at-arms were able to pass." It was through no lack of valour on the part of Godemar de Fay and his force that the English effected the crossing of the Somme. The fault lay entirely with the French King, who, on the previous day, had lost touch with the enemy, and who had followed the advice of his captains, when they told him, 'Sire, you may now march at your ease; the English are in a trap and must surrender.'

As soon as the advance guard had cleared the crossing, King Edward hurried on the passage of the main body; and none too soon, for before the baggage trains could be sent across the French army arrived on the scene of action; the rear-guard had to cross in hot haste, leaving a considerable booty in the hands of the French. Meanwhile King Edward had given orders that Godemar de Fay should be driven into Abbeville and that another column should seize Crottoy. Thus the line of retreat through the forest of Crecy was covered. On August 25th the main body of the English withdrew through the forest while a strong rear-guard watched the ford at Blanche Tache.

So far the net results of the campaign had been small and out of all proportion to the magnificent openings, which Edward lacked the insight to seize. Instead of gaining a brilliant success, he had been most lucky in escaping absolute disaster. But Edward never rose superior to the strategic level of his time, and he

certainly lacked the faculty of "guessing what is happening on the other side of a hill." Yet deficient as he was of the higher conceptions of strategy Edward was no mean soldier. He had the personal magnetism which caused men to follow him and cling to him as "readily and as surely as iron filings to a magnet." His courage, both moral and physical, was superb. He was cool-headed and able to estimate things at their worth—not unduly moved by good or bad news. In the critical moments at Poissy, and before the Somme, he displayed a calm confidence which inspirited and invigorated both his personal staff and the whole of his army. His presence of mind never failed him, and his ability to grasp a tactical problem was all the more marked in contrast with his absolute failure to master the simplest elements of strategy.

Having successfully penetrated through the forest of Crecy, with the full assurance that his line of retreat was once again secure, with commendable boldness he determined to give battle to the King of France. To the layman this might seem unwarranted rashness, on a par with his previous conduct in advancing on Paris ; but the soldier at once recognises that it was the result of that cool calculation, which is called *coup d'œil*, and which consists in rapidly discovering a truth which the ordinary mind is unable to grasp, or can do so only after long repetition and careful examination. Edward had gauged the fact that his swift and almost supernatural escape had, for the time being, enormously raised the morale of his own army and had correspond-

ingly shaken that of the French ; the action at Blanche Tache had shown him that he had not overestimated the worth of the enormous tactical asset which he possessed in his archers, while the position at Crecy had immediately caught his eye as an ideal place for fighting a defensive engagement of the type he contemplated. The hour of hurried retreat had now passed ; the hour of action had arrived. A thrill of delight passed through the hearts of all when the King declared to his staff, " Let us stand here till we have seen our enemy, for I am now in Ponthieu, in the inheritance of my mother which was given her on her marriage, and I should like to contest my quarrel with my enemy, Philip of Valois."

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF CRECY

WHILE the soldiers were discussing the coming battle and enjoying their rest after the hurried retreat of the last ten days, the King was busily engaged with his staff. The position he had chosen was a strong one. It lay above the village of Crecy, along the crest of the downs facing south-east ; to gain it the enemy would have to cross a gentle valley about six hundred yards wide. The right flank, which was pushed forward, following the formation of the ground, was absolutely unturnable as it rested on the impassable forest of Crecy ; it was also difficult to attack owing to the swamps of the little river Maye. The left flank was covered by the houses and gardens of the village of Wadicourt. To prevent any attempt at turning this flank the King had parked his baggage column in rear of Wadicourt, and formed there a leaguer which was practically impenetrable. The total length of the English position was just a little over a mile.

The right was entrusted to the Prince of Wales ; on his staff were the Earls of Warwick and Oxford and

Count Godfrey of Harcourt, while four Knights of the Garter—Sir Thomas Holland, Lord Stafford, Bartholomew Lord Burghersh, and Sir John Chandos—fought under him. The Prince's division was probably about eight thousand strong, being composed of twelve hundred men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and three thousand Welsh spearmen. The division, or battle, as it was called, was drawn up with the men-at-arms dismounted in the centre and the archers along the crest of the hill in front of them. The archers had orders, when the French attack was driven home, to retire to the flanks, and there to continue their fire. To delay the French attacking columns under the fire of the archers, lines of small pits about one foot square and one foot deep were dug all along the front of the position. The archers were drawn up in the usual formation of a harrow; this permitted a maximum amount of fire per yard, and at the same time it allowed each archer perfect freedom in the use of his weapon. The whole object of the English tactics was to shake thoroughly and, if possible, to break the French attacking columns with arrow fire before they reached the English line, and, at any rate, to handle them so severely that, if they managed to press home the attack they would be easily repelled by the comparatively small body of English men-at-arms.

Echeloned on the Prince's left was the second division of the army, under the Earls of Northampton and Arundel. It was composed of twelve hundred men-at-arms and three thousand archers, but does not

seem to have had any spearmen attached to it. This division was drawn up with the men-at-arms dismounted in the centre and the archers on each flank. The object of this was that, when the French attack was pressed home, the archers of the Prince's left flank would join those of Northampton's right, and then the English centre would be composed entirely of archers in a position to enfilade the columns attacking the English left, while they themselves were protected from attack by the Prince's men-at-arms, who would cover their right flank.

The King, with the third division in reserve, occupied a position immediately above the centre, in front of the wood of La Grange. His division numbered about eight thousand men, and was composed of one thousand five hundred men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and two thousand five hundred Welsh spearmen. King Edward himself, as commander-in-chief, took up his position by a windmill, between his own division and that of the Prince of Wales, from whence he could command a view of the whole battle-field. The one object of his tactics was to utilise his archers to the utmost, and at the same time, by pushing forward his right flank in an impregnable position, to compel the French to narrow their front, and thus not only to lose what superiority numbers might give them, but also to place their crowded ranks at the mercy of the archers.

By the evening of Friday, August 26th, the English army was in position on the downs above the village of

Crecy. Meanwhile the French advance was greatly delayed. As they could not force the forest road in the face of the English, they were compelled to turn the forest of Crecy and cross the Somme at the bridge of Abbeville. King Edward was well informed of all their movements by his scouts, and knew that he need not expect an attack before the afternoon of the next day, Saturday, August 26th, because the French army was bound to follow the road which skirted the forest of Crecy.

On the morning of the 26th the King, mounted on a small palfrey, holding a white wand in his hand, attended by his two marshals, rode at a foot pace through the ranks, encouraging and entreating the army that they would guard his honour and defend his right. "He spoke this so sweetly and with so cheerful a countenance, that all who had been dispirited were directly comforted by seeing and hearing him. When he had thus visited all the battles, it was near ten o'clock; he returned to his own division and ordered them all to eat heartily and drink a glass. They ate and drank at their ease, and having packed up their pots, barrels, &c., in the carts, they returned to the ranks, according to the marshals' orders, and seated themselves on the ground, placing their helmets and bows before them, that they might be fresher when their enemies should arrive."

While on the English side preparations for the battle were completed in a careful and leisurely manner, on the French side there was nothing but hurry and

confusion. On the evening of Friday, the 25th, their scouts had once again come into contact with the English, and reported that they were encamped somewhere in the direction of Crecy. The French King left Abbeville early on the morning of the 26th, but his staff had so little idea of the marshalling of a host that the van had already reached Braye, eight miles from Abbeville, before the rear-guard had quitted that town. The advance was really a disorderly pursuit, for the French did not believe that the English would stand and fight. It was at Braye that King Philip heard for the first time that the English were really awaiting him at Crecy, and that a battle was imminent. Four knights, whom he sent forward to reconnoitre, speedily returned and advised him, in view of the strength of the English position, to halt and reform his army with a view to battle on the morrow. Accepting the wisdom of this advice, Philip ordered his advance-guard to fall back, and his whole army to halt.

“The King commanded that it should be done; and the two marshals rode, one towards the front and the other to the rear, crying out, ‘Halt, banners, in the Name of God and St. Denis.’ Those that were in front halted, but those that were behind said they would not halt.” Worse still, “all the roads between Abbeville and Crecy were covered with common people, who, when they came within three leagues of their enemies, drew their swords, brawling out ‘Kill, kill’; and with them were many great lords who were eager to make show of their courage.”

The total strength of King Philip's army was probably about sixty thousand of all ranks—just three times that of the English. Richard of Wynkeley, one of King Edward's clerks, who was present on the field of battle, slightly exaggerating, computed them at twelve thousand men-at-arms and sixty thousand infantry. The men-at-arms were the picked warriors of Northern and Central France, many of whom had been opposing Derby in Guienne, strongly reinforced by volunteers and mercenaries from among the turbulent feudatories of the German Empire. The infantry was strengthened by between six and seven thousand skilled Genoese cross-bowmen, but the great mass of the common soldiery were raw communal militia, little to be relied on.

It was the hour of vespers when Philip arrived at the front, and found his marshals trying in vain to deploy their forces. Thereon, hasty as ever, he ordered them to attack at once. "The sight of the English made King Philip furious, for he hated them, and he ordered his marshals to send the Genoese forward and begin the battle. . . . But they were in no mood for fighting, for they were dropping* with fatigue, having marched on foot more than six leagues under arms and carrying their arbalests. They therefore sent and told their Constable that they were not in condition to perform any great warlike feats. These words were carried to the Earl of Alençon, who flew into a passion and said, 'Let us charge this rabble, which fails when it is wanted.'"

Meanwhile a very heavy thunderstorm broke on the two armies, but it soon cleared off, and the evening sun, low down, shone bright in the face of the French. The Constable rallied the Genoese and led them to the attack. Twice they halted to pick up their dressing, shouting loudly as they advanced, to frighten the English. The third time they halted their leader judged that they were within range, and ordered them to open fire, which they did with a shout. "The English now stepped forward and shot their arrows so thickly upon the Genoese that it resembled a snow-storm. These had never met such archers as those of England: and when they felt their arrows piercing heads and arms and faces they were so discomforted that many of them cut the cords of their bows, and others threw them down and took to flight. The French had a large body of men-at-arms, splendidly clad and mounted, to support the Genoese. The King of France, with great *maladresse*, when he saw what had happened, called out, 'Kill me all that rabble, for they stop our road up without reason.'"

Thereon the Earl of Alençon, failing to understand that it was the great rapidity and accuracy of the English fire, and not treachery, which had caused the Genoese to retire, rode them down mercilessly in a wild, ill-timed charge on the English right. The action of Alençon was followed by the various French divisional leaders: they waited for no orders, and they failed entirely in self-control and judgment.

Column after column, pressing on the heels of those

before, blindly struggled towards the English right, so temptingly thrown forward. The result was wild confusion; each fresh column was swamped by the retiring masses of those already defeated and thrown into hopeless disorder, long before it could come under the withering fire of the English archers. "For the bowmen let fly among them at large, and did not lose a single shaft, for every arrow told on horse or man, piercing head or arm or leg among the riders and sending the horses mad. For some stood stock still and others rushed sideways, and most of all began kicking in spite of their masters, and some were rearing or tossing their heads at the arrows, and others when they felt the bit threw themselves down. So the knights in the first French battle fell, slain or sore stricken, almost without seeing the men who slew them."

"The valiant old King of Bohemia was killed there. . . . 'How goes the battle?' he had inquired. 'The Genoese are discomfited,' replied the monk of Baseilles, 'and the French are killing them by order of King Philip.' 'A poor beginning for us, alas!' returned the King. 'Where is my son Charles?' 'Sire, we know not,' answered his knights; 'he is fighting in front we believe.' 'Gentlemen, you are all my men, my friends, my companions. I beg you to lead me forward that I may strike a blow this day.' The knights replied that they would directly lead him forward; and in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of their horses together, and put the King at their head that he might gratify his wish

and advance towards the enemy. . . . The King rode in among the enemy and made good use of his sword ; for he and his companions fought most gallantly. They advanced so far that they were all slain, and on the morrow they were found on the ground, with their horses all tied together."

Such devotion was not entirely unrewarded in spite of the unchivalrous remarks of one of the chroniclers, who asserts that, "owing to his blindness the King killed with his sword as many of his own men as of the enemy," for at one moment a wave of French horsemen actually surged up to the Prince's position, and there was some fierce hand-to-hand fighting between the French horse and English men-at-arms. "The Earl of Alençon advanced in regular order upon the English, as did the Earl of Flanders from another quarter. These two lords, coasting, as it were, past the archers, came to the Prince's division, where they fought valiantly for a long time. The King of France was eager to march to where he saw their banners displayed, but there was a hedge of archers before him."

It was during this *mêlée* with the divisions of Alençon and the Count of Flanders that the Prince was actually hurled to the ground, and only saved by his standard-bearer, Richard de Beaumont, who covered him with the great banner of Wales and stood over him till the attack was repulsed. Thereon the Earl of Warwick, feeling his responsibility for the safety of the Prince, sent Sir Thomas Norwich to the King to beg for aid. Sir Thomas, on reaching the King, said, "Sire, the

Earl of Warwick, the Lord Stafford, the Lord Reginald Cobham, and others on your son's staff, are vigorously assailed by the French; and they entreat that you would come to their assistance with your battle for, if their numbers should increase, they fear he will have much to do." The King replied, "Is my son dead, unhorsed or so badly wounded that he cannot aid himself?" "No Sire, please God, but he is in a hard passage of arms and has great need of your help." "Return to him, Sir Thomas," replied the King, "to those who sent you, and tell them from me, not to send for me this day, or expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life: and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs: for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honour of this day shall be given to him, and to those into whose care I have entrusted him."

This message was no mere piece of reckless bravado, for King Edward, from his commanding position by the windmill, had seen that the flood of the French attack was passed, that the ebb had set in, and that the wave which had rolled up to the Prince's position was the final effort of the day. His confident message to the Earl of Warwick was in reality one of those shrewd touches whereby he played so cunningly on the chords of his subjects' loyalty and enthusiasm. The message sent a thrill through the hearts of the leaders, and of the rank and file of the Prince's division. Theirs alone was the honour of guarding the King's son, theirs alone was the glory of the fight

and the proud boast of upholding the arms of England. But though he sent back Sir Thomas empty-handed, the King quietly allowed the Bishop of Durham to take thirty knights to the aid of the Prince, and at the same time directed the Earls of Arundel and Northampton to push forward their division in line with that of the Prince, and thus to divert the whole attack from falling on the English right.

Darkness did not end the fight. The French barons of the rear and centre, with fierce anger, strove again and again to retrieve the day; but each successive attack was weaker and more haphazard. Occasionally an individual knight managed to escape the flying arrows, and to force his way right up to the English line, only there to fall beneath the shrewd blows of the men-at-arms, or by the fire of the archers as he tried to gallop back to his men. It was not till midnight that the sporadic attacks of the French entirely ceased, and by that time the English had counted fifteen or sixteen separate attacks. During all these hours the archers and men-at-arms had never left their position or broken their ranks. There had been no effort made to develop a counter-attack, for the orders of the King were strict, that on no account should the ranks be broken. The English force of men-at-arms was too small to risk being taken in detail without the effective support of their archers, and the King knew that huge communal levies were following up the rear of the French army, and accordingly he could afford to take no risks. But in

spite of all orders to the contrary the Welsh spearmen could not be held in control, and again and again issued out in clouds to hamstring horses, to murder fallen knights, and to plunder the dead and dying.

“When on this Saturday night, the English heard no more hooting or shouting, nor any man crying out to particular lords or their banners, they looked on the field as their own, and their enemies as beaten. They made great fires and lighted torches because of the obscurity of the night. King Edward then came down from his post, who all that day had not put on his helmet, and with his whole division advanced to the Prince of Wales, whom he embraced in his arms and kissed and said, ‘Sweet son, God give you good perseverance : you are my son, for most loyally have you acquitted yourself this day : you are worthy to be a sovereign.’ The Prince bowed down very low and humbled himself, giving all honour to the King his father. The English, during the night, made frequent thanksgivings to the Lord for the happy issue of the day, and without rioting, for the King had forbidden all riot or noise.”

Early next morning the English stood to arms, for they had not yet realised the extent of the victory they had gained. The morning was foggy and misty, and they could dimly perceive heavy bodies of troops moving towards them. The King sent forward the Earls of Suffolk and Northampton to reconnoitre. The Earls, with a strong force of five hundred men-at-arms and two hundred archers, pushed boldly for-

ward, and at once dispersed some detachments of regular troops from Rouen and Beauvais, who, ignorant of the disaster of the previous day, were attempting to join the French army. Following up this easy victory they next encountered the communal forces under the Archbishop of Rouen and the Grand Prior of France, who were also ignorant of the events of the preceding day. "Here began a fresh battle, for those two lords were well attended by good men-at-arms : however, they could not withstand the English, but were almost all slain with the two chiefs who commanded them : very few escaping. In the course of the morning the English found many French who had lost their road on Saturday, and had lain in the open fields, not knowing what had become of their King or their leaders. The English put to the sword all they met : and it has been assured me (Froissart) that of the foot soldiers sent from the cities, towns and municipalities, there were slain this Sunday morning, four times as many as in the battle on Saturday. The force, which had been sent to look after the French, returned as the King was coming back from Mass, and related to him all they had seen and met with. After he had been assured by them that there was no appearance of the French collecting another organised force, he sent to have the numbers and condition of the dead examined."

The heralds, despatched to perform this office, reported to the King that, of the enemy, they had counted and recognised by their devices one thousand five hundred and forty-two princes, lords, and knights. As

regards the rank and file no such careful examination was made, and the estimate varied from ten to twenty thousand. The English loss in the face of this was absurdly small—two knights, one squire, forty men-at-arms and archers, and a handful of Welsh spearmen; but we must remember that only on one occasion did the French succeed in crossing the English fire zone in strength. The mass of the casualties among the French nobility occurred in their vain attempts to induce their men to face the English arrow fire on the day of the great battle, while no doubt the heavy losses among the rank and file were greatly swelled in the desultory fighting with the communal militia on the Sunday morning.

In estimating the part played by the Prince himself in the battle of Crecy we must remember that he was only just sixteen; that, though nominally in charge of the right division, he was really under the care of the Earls of Warwick and Oxford, that all tactical arrangements were made for him by his staff. His duty was not to organise victory, but by his own prowess to fire his soldiers with enthusiasm. The responsibility of command was not yet his, he was free to concentrate his whole attention on the success of his own skill in arms. For the Prince, at any rate, Crecy was much more the sportive *mêlée* of the tournament than the bitter struggle of two hostile nations. His part, in fact, was spectacular; he played it well, and the Earl of Warwick and many a seasoned warrior could proudly boast, at the close of the day, that the heir of the

English crown was one of the finest and most courageous lances in Europe.

The victory was entirely due to the consummate tactical ability of King Edward. Nothing could have been better than the choice he made of a position which could only be attacked on a narrow front, so that a small force could neutralise the numerical superiority of a much larger host. The temptingly thrown forward right flank, carefully entrenched, unturnable, resting on the forest of Crecy was a masterpiece of tactical ingenuity. The method whereby the English centre, composed solely of archers, was refused, or thrown back under cover of the men-at-arms of the right, in such a position that it would enfilade with withering fire any force attempting to attack his left, was another admirable example of the way in which a general of ability can avail himself of the conformation of the ground.

But admirable as all these arrangements were, for their utter and total rout and disaster, the French army had only themselves to blame. They had lost touch with the enemy after Blanche Tache. They had despised their foe, thinking he was in wild retreat. Owing to the lack of order and discipline in the army, they had taken no advantage of the lucky reconnaissance from Saint Braye. The French leaders had not grasped the fact that discipline is to a great extent the outcome of careful organisation, equipment, and feeding, and that the victory of masses is not the result of mere bravery. King Philip failed conspicuously as a general.



CROSSBOWMEN



ARCHERS

He could not exert his authority or see his orders obeyed. He could not control himself when he saw his foe. The disaster of Crecy was due to two distinct faults—bad generalship and lack of discipline.

The battle of Crecy is inseparably connected with the name of Edward of Woodstock, for it is from this time onwards that the French began to call the young Prince of Wales Edward le noir. Like the good Lord James Douglas, Marlborough, and many another hero, he became the bogie whereby the mothers of his enemies used to terrify their babes. Strange as it may seem, the first time we find the sobriquet of the Black Prince attached to Edward of Woodstock, is in the Grafton's "Chronicle," written in 1563, in the reign of Elizabeth, almost two hundred years after his death. Holinshed, writing a few years later, also adopted this French sobriquet for Prince Edward, and Shakespeare, who drew largely on Holinshed for his historical plays, copied the name, so that from his day onwards the hero of the early days of the Hundred Years' War has ever been known as the Black Prince.

The story of the blind King of Bohemia is also intimately connected with the name of the Black Prince. For it is commonly supposed that the Prince assumed the arms and device of the blind King; but this tale has often been challenged. The authority for it is the learned Camden, who lived in the seventeenth century, but he does not state on what information he relied. As far as can be ascertained the three ostrich feathers formed no part of the arms of Bohemia,

for the blind King generally used as his crest the entire wing of a vulture; but John of Luxembourg had claims to many small Italian principalities, and indeed to other countries, and he might occasionally have used the ostrich feathers as his crest from sentimental reasons although he had lost all real authority in those countries.

“Prend garde au bon roi de Behaigne,
 Qui en France et en Alemaigne,
 En Savoie et en Lombardie,
 En Danemarche et en Hongrie,
 En Poulaine, en Prusse, en Cracoe
 En Massuwe, en Russe, en Lestoe
 Als pris et honneur conquerre.
 Il donnoit ses joiaus et terre ;
 Or argent, rien ne retenoit,
 Fors l'honneur ; ad ce tenoit,
 Et il en avoit plus que nulz.”

As regards the motto “Ich Diene” (I serve), it might quite well have been chosen by the old King who had suffered so many reverses. Be that as it may, we find in the pictures in the earliest MSS. of Froissart that Prince Edward is always distinguished by a plume of feathers in his helmet. But we must also note that several of his brothers used the same device—an ostrich feather on their seals; while we know that the Prince’s favourite motto was “Houmont” (High Spirit). Actually on his tomb we find both “Houmont” and “Ich Diene.” But from his day onwards the ostrich feathers and “Ich Diene” have been assumed by each successive Prince of Wales.

CHAPTER VII

CALAIS

THE battle of Crecy had for the moment disposed of all the armed forces of France, but Edward wisely recognised that he was too weak to profit by this demoralisation. Instead, therefore, of at once assuming the offensive, he continued his retreat towards Calais. "On the Monday the English were ordered to move on, but out of grace and pity the King of England directed that all the bodies of the great Lords should be conveyed to a neighbouring monastery called Maintenay and be buried in consecrated ground, and he told the people of the country that there would be a truce of three days in order that they might search the field of Crecy and bury the bodies."

Retiring on a broad front with the marshals flung out to each flank, the army pillaged and plundered on its way, devastating and burning the towns of Vaubain, Serain, Estaples, and Rue. On September 4th, the English reached their objective, and the long, tedious siege was begun. Calais was then a small market town which owed its strength not so much to its fortifi-

cations as to the fact that it was situated among great belts of marshes, "being closed," as Stowe tells us, "about with a double wall and a double ditch, hard on the shore of the English sea, right over against the Castle of Dover. And there is belonging to the same towne an haven wherein ships may lie very safe without danger." The King quickly realised the fact that it was impossible to take Calais by assault, and accordingly he was forced to content himself with a strict blockade. Meanwhile, owing to the severity of the winter, the army had to be placed under cover in a fortified camp, and a regular town of huts was formed round the walls of Calais, which the English called Newtown le hardi.

Before his retreat from Paris, King Edward had written to the English Admiral of the South, Sir John de Montgomery, telling him to appear before Calais early in September, ready to take the army home to England or to assist in the siege, according as circumstances arose. During the whole of the winter the fleet lay on and off outside the harbour. The muster roll tells us that in 1347 the English fleet off Calais at times numbered as many as seven hundred native vessels, manned by eight thousand one hundred and fifty-one sailors. There were also thirty-eight foreign ships with the fleet, containing one thousand two hundred and four sailors; these foreign ships were (as also a considerable number of the English vessels) probably used for bringing up victuals and munitions. But in spite of this huge armament the French, as late as

Easter Day, 1347, continued from time to time to throw provisions into the town from the sea. This arose partly from the fact that, owing to the stress of weather, the blockade could not be continually enforced, and also because just west of Calais there ran inland a large shallow creek which broke the investing line. Consequently flat-bottomed boats from Boulogne, hugging the shore, managed to steal into the town in spite of the English cruisers. But as the summer of 1347 advanced the blockade became more strict, and the creek was made impassable by means of a palisade driven right out into the shallow water by the Earl of Northampton.

Save for the occasional convoys of provisions brought in by sea, John de Vienne, the Burgundian knight, who was in command at Calais, had to trust entirely to his own resources. Luckily he had a considerable force of men-at-arms and archers, and the citizens of Calais aided him to the best of their ability. But though the King of France could make no attempt during the autumn of 1346 to relieve the town, his ally, the King of Scotland, in accordance with Philip's views, expressed in a letter to him in July, seized the opportunity to make a vigorous demonstration in the northern counties of England.

“Sir Philip the Valais, suth for to say,
Sent unto Sir David, and faire gan him pray
At ride through England, their fomen to slay,
And said none es at home, to let hym the way,
None letes him the way, to wende where he will
But with schiphered staves fand he is fill.”

There were more than shepherds to defend the northern counties; the shire levies under the Archbishop of York, the Earl of Angus, and the Lords Mowbray, Percy, and Neville of Raby, on October 17th met the Scots' army at Neville's Cross, and, after a hotly contested engagement, succeeded in practically annihilating the Scottish force. In spite of the splendid devotion of his knights, David of Scotland was captured, and all the great barons of that realm were either killed or taken prisoners.

As the winter progressed the siege seemed to languish; the English cannon, which were probably used at Calais for the first time, made little or no impression on the walls; the defective arrangement of the chambers prevented the powder giving proper impetus to the shot. Meanwhile there was great depression in the camp at Newtown le hardi. Lack of proper commissariat and the utter want of sanitary arrangements caused an outbreak of enteric fever. Although only one important personage was attacked by the disease, the mortality among the rank and file was enormous. By the spring death, desertion, and disease had ruined the army of Crecy, and enormous efforts had to be made to raise recruits. Free pardons for all murders and felonies were given to all who would enlist for service abroad. Commissions were appointed in every county to array archers. Luckily the French force in Aquitaine had been withdrawn before the battle of Crecy, and consequently Derby, now Earl of Lancaster, and his comrades were able to join the army before Calais early in the spring of 1347.

About Whitsuntide the King of France began at last to make active preparations to raise the siege. He appointed Amiens as the rendezvous for his army, but the local levies were slow in taking the field, and it was not till July that he was ready to move. Meanwhile Calais was in sore straits. Jean de Vienne had early in the siege driven out one thousand seven hundred old men, women, and children to starve between the armies. Edward in pity had given these unfortunates a supply of meal, and allowed them to pass through his lines. But by midsummer Calais was at its last gasp. On July 18th, as soon as he heard that the French army was actually ready to start, King Edward, with considerable foresight, sent out a strong column under the Earl of Lancaster, which swept up all the dépôts of provisions and cattle which the French had prepared for their advance. The French King therefore moved slowly. There was only one line of advance open to him, namely, from the west, for the English allies, the men of Flanders, lay upon the frontier of Artois. King Edward accordingly drew up his array on the sand dunes to the west of the town, and protected his right flank by his fleet. There, on July 27th, the French King found him when he arrived at Sangatte, a few miles from Calais. The position was so strong that King Philip despaired of attacking it, and at once opened negotiations. But he would not relinquish the sovereignty of Aquitaine, and Edward would hear of no terms which did not ensure that province for England. After some talk of settling the matter by a duel between

four picked warriors from each army, Philip finally challenged Edward to battle if his army would leave their entrenchments. This challenge Edward unwisely accepted ; but the French King at the last moment found his courage failing him : on August 2nd he hurriedly broke up his camp and withdrew into France, leaving Calais to its fate.

Stowe gives a very vivid picture of the attempted relief, drawing his details from the description given by an English knight, Sir Thomas Moor, who was actually serving in the army. "In the meane season they which were besieged made known their state to the French King by signes and tokens, for at his first coming they within the town set up his ancient on the chieftest tower of the castle ; and also they set out banners of the dukes and earls of France, and, a little after the shutting in of the evening, they made a great light on the top of one of the highest towers which was towards the army of the Frenchmen ; and there withal they made a great shoute and noyse with trumpets and drummes. The second night they made the like, but somewhat lesse. The third night a very small fire, giving therewith a sorrowful voice, signifying thereby that their strength touching the keeping of the towne was quite spent and done. And the same night they took in all their flags and ancients, except their standart. At the last, the day of batell drew on, against which there came out of England and Dutchland toward the help of King Edward seventeen thousand fighting men, whereupon the French King

betimes in the morning of the second daye of August, making fire in his tents, fledde, whose tail the Duke of Lancaster and Earle of Northampton cutting off, they slewe and tooke many of them. When they of Calais perceived this, they tooke their standart doune, and with great sorrow cast it from the tower downe into the ditch."

The men of Calais had made a stout resistance, and their King had requited them ill. How sore their straits were the English knew well, for a despatch from Jean de Vienne had been captured on June 25th. Therein he wrote: "Know most dread and dear lord, that although the people are well and in good spirits, the town has great need of corn, wine, and meal. Everything is eaten up—dogs, cats, horses—and we have nothing left to subsist on, unless we eat each other. You wrote me to hold out as long as there was anything to eat, and now we have reached the direst extremity. We have therefore agreed, if succour comes not immediately, to sally out into the open and fight for life or death. For we would rather die on the field with honour than eat each other. Wherefore most dread and dear lord, make an effort to help us, for if remedy cannot be speedily devised you shall see no more letters from me, and the town will be lost and every soul with it."

There was nothing now but to surrender; the townsmen were too weak from lack of food to attempt to fight in the open. Philip had played them false; the memory of Crecy had obsessed his reason. His pitiful excuse

for his sorry conduct was "Better to lose a town than place in jeopardy the lives of one hundred thousand men," adding as a further excuse, "If we lose it now we may retake it another time." This "other time" did not arrive for more than two hundred years.

On the morning of August 4th Jean de Vienne mounted the ramparts, and made signs that he wanted to parley. King Edward sent Sir Walter de Manny and Sir Ralph Basset to discuss the terms of capitulation. Jean de Vienne demanded that the garrison and townsfolk should be allowed to march out with the honours of war. But the envoys, according to the King's instruction, demanded unconditional surrender. According to the laws of war, of the period, the lives of the garrison were forfeited. The reason of this is quite clear. Before the introduction of artillery the loss of the besiegers was always extremely severe, while, save for the effect of hunger, the besieged suffered but little. The only means, therefore, that the besiegers had of forcing the speedy surrender of a strong position arose from the knowledge that the customary penalty for resistance, when there was no hope of relief, was the forfeiture of the lives of the besieged.

Jean de Vienne could, however, plead that he had offered to capitulate, as soon as the King of France had given up all efforts to relieve the town. When the envoys returned, the chivalrous Sir Walter spoke manfully on behalf of the men at Calais. The King surrounded by the Prince and the leaders of the army, listened to his pleas, and was evidently struck by

the point which Sir Walter made, that, "if you put these brave men to death, your enemy will do likewise in similar cases to your soldiers, and you will not easily get men to garrison your fortresses in France." He therefore sent back Sir Walter with a message that if six of the principal citizens came to him with bare hands and feet with halters round their necks, bringing the keys of the town, in return for these six placing themselves at his absolute disposal, he would pardon the remainder of the inhabitants. On receipt of this message there was consternation in Calais. At last a citizen, Eustace de St. Pierre, spoke forth, "Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great pity to suffer so many people to die of hunger, if any man could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour, if such misery could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six."

Such self-devotion was at once effective. Five other chivalrous citizens stood forth to die for their fellows. Jean de Vienne, too weak to walk, mounted on a pony, escorted the heroes to the English camp, where he surrendered his sword to the King. Sir Walter Manny met the burghers and escorted them to the royal presence. The King, surrounded by his whole Court, received the prisoners in silence with angry looks. The young Prince and all the barons and knights in vain entreated him that he would be merciful. But his

only reply to these entreaties was to summon the headsman. Human nature could no longer endure the tragedy, be it real or pretence. Queen Philippa, who at that time was far advanced in pregnancy, fell on her knees and with tears cried, "Ah, gentle Sire, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to see you, I have never asked you one favour: now I most humbly beg as a gift for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be merciful to these men." The King regarded her for some time in silence, and then said, "Lady, I would you had been anywhere but here: you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you: I therefore give you these to do as you please with them." Thereon the Queen conducted the noble six to her quarters, had the halters removed from their necks, clothed them and fed them, and then escorted them in safety out of the camp.

"Et ensement, a voir entendre,
Fut Calais par force conquise
Par la puissance et par l'emprise
Du noble roy et de son fils
Le Prince qui tant fut hardis."

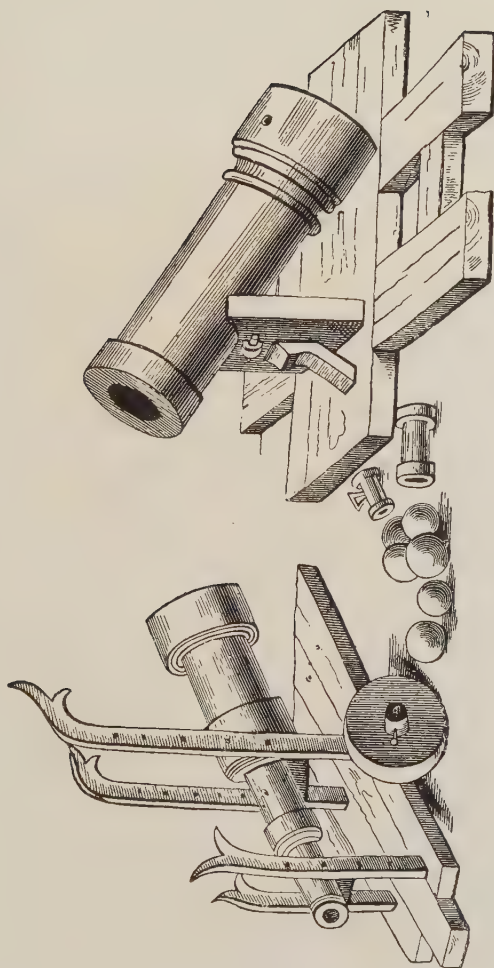
So Calais had fallen and Edward had gained his desire. No longer need the English merchant hug the shores of Dover in fear of the dreaded corsairs of France. The Thames could now in safety disgorge her cogs, deep loaded with woolfels. The wine-laden galleons of Bordeaux need no longer, in fear, put into Southampton, but could boldly sail up to the wharfs

of London. England held Calais. All seemed well. Little could Edward foresee the future. He thought he had secured a firm stepping-stone to the crown of France: a secure position whence he might at any moment dash forth to seize all Northern France and Paris. But fate willed otherwise; instead of being the firm foundation on which the Plantagenets might build up a Continental empire, Calais was to be the millstone hung round the necks of Edward's descendants. For Calais ate up a good half of the income of the English kings; no longer could "the King live off his own"; and hence the royal power speedily fell into the control of Parliament. The huge garrison of regularly enlisted soldiers, which lay in Calais, was a force which, under the skilful hand of Warwick the King-maker, decided from time to time the fate of the rival houses of York and Lancaster. But most pregnant of evil, Edward holding Calais, no longer thought of his fleet; the battle of Sluys and all that followed it was forgotten. He forgot that England's happiness lay in being "environed with a great ditch from all the world beside." He attempted to "turn his ships and shipping into Troops of Horse and Companies of Foot." In the end his enemies, wiser than he, seeing where their power lay, turned their attention to the sea. Thus they cut the might of England at the root, and Edward in his declining years had to content himself with supporting the immense burden of the Calais garrison, while his beloved Aquitaine was torn from him piece by piece.

The King's first thought on the surrender of Calais was to make sure of his possession. Jean de Vienne and some dozen knights, after receiving noble gifts from the King, were sent as honoured prisoners to England. The great bulk of the common people was fed, and then transported to Guisnes and the other French towns of the neighbourhood. Thereafter Calais had to be refortified and repeopled with sturdy burghers from England.

While the King was busy with the fortifications of Calais the Queen gave birth to a daughter, Margaret, who later became the wife of John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke. Meanwhile foraging parties were sent far and wide into Northern France to collect stores to fill the new magazine at Calais. The French offered serious resistance to these parties, and the Earl of Warwick on one occasion received a severe check near St. Omer. Prince Edward was entrusted with the charge of one of these light columns, and his raid was eminently successful. He swept the country right up to the banks of the Somme and returned laden with booty, well pleased with the success of his first independent command.

Early in October the King, who had waited till Queen Philippa was ready to move, returned to England with the Prince and the headquarters staff, leaving behind, among others, a certain Americ of Pavia, of whom we shall hear more anon. The royal party arrived in England exactly fifteen months from the date of their landing in Normandy.



XIV CENTURY CANNON

The Prince had every reason to be proud of the result of his first campaign. He had taken part in the most successful expedition which had ever left the shores of England. He had seen his father beard his enemy in his lair at Paris. He had taken a foremost part in the great victory of Crecy, and his name was thereafter one to conjure with in England and on the Continent. He had been all through the greatest siege of that age, and had learned the lesson which his great-grandfather, Edward I., had foreseen when building his Bastides in Aquitaine, that, save for hunger, a carefully fortified town was impregnable, under the existing art of war. (The siege of Calais had proved that the much-discussed, evil-smelling cannon had not yet been so far perfected as to falsify this prediction.) It was partly owing to his aid that Calais, the stronghold of pirates, the dagger that had hitherto threatened the neck of the Channel, was now in English hands. He had seen English knight and English yeoman teach the men of France that Merrie England bred such sons that no one dare defy them. Thus it was that, glorying in his birthright as an Englishman, proud of his position as the eldest son of the greatest warrior in Christendom, Prince Edward once again set foot on his native soil.

CHAPTER VIII

1347-1353

THE years immediately following the fall of Calais were, on the whole, the most uneventful period of the Black Prince's life. On his return from France he had just entered his eighteenth year, but after fifteen months of continual active service, in an age when men developed young, he could no longer be considered a youth. Unfortunately, however, though relieved from the discipline of boyhood, his position for long prevented him from feeling to the full the responsibilities of manhood; while, at the same time, owing to his exalted rank, he was peculiarly exposed to all its temptations.

As a peer of the realm the Prince of Wales had his seat in Parliament and in the Council of the King, but these positions brought with them merely nominal duties. Edward III. had no intention of resigning the control of affairs to his son. He was no mere cypher, like Henry III., who gladly effaced himself in his later years to allow the future Edward I. to govern the realm. Hence in all affairs of State the Prince had to play a very minor part. In private he might talk over business with his father, might even offer sugges-

tions which ran contrary to his ideas, but in public he was bound to appear in complete accord with his policy. For at a time when the political world was in a state of unrest, when the representatives of the boroughs and shires were showing an unprecedented independence, any friction between the King and his heir apparent would have gravely affected the centre of control. In short, from expediency, it was imperative that the Prince of Wales should not mix himself in politics. In fact we may be permitted to doubt whether, with his strong admiration for his father and his high, almost religious, sense of duty to the Crown, the Prince would in any case have allowed himself any public expression of opinion in matters of State.

Forced to find an outlet for his activities in another direction, it was to war that his thoughts turned. During the years of peace he occupied his time with training himself and his comrades for future service, and the chronicles are full of the magnificent hastiludes and jousts in which he took part. It was most unfortunate for the Prince that he was thus compelled to live what was, on the whole, a mere life of pleasure. Impulsive, enthusiastic, and generous, whatever he did he threw himself into it heart and soul. Each succeeding tourney had to be more elaborate and more fanciful than the preceding one. The burden of debt, incurred before the Crecy campaign, was never cast off. It seems that not only his position but his nature demanded a lavish display of hospitality; and so year by year his finances became more deeply involved.

On the way up to London the Prince stopped at Canterbury and made his devotions at the altar of the Trinity in the Cathedral, where he showed his piety and his gratitude to Heaven by loading the shrine of Thomas à Becket with costly gifts. It was to some extent these spoils of France which caused Erasmus to write of St. Thomas' shrine that in it "gold was the meanest thing to be seen."

On October 16th the King, the Queen, and the Prince made their triumphal entry into London and were escorted with all due pomp by the Mayor and citizens to the palace of Westminster. The city was full of distinguished prisoners. In addition to the Counts of Tankerville and Eu, there was David King of Scotland, and before the year ended Sir Thomas Dagworth brought back in triumph as his prisoner Charles of Blois, the French candidate for the Dukedom of Brittany. During the latter half of 1347, and in 1348 and 1349, numerous hastiludes were held. At Smithfield, under whose elms the cattle and horse markets took place, the King had a permanent pavilion of stone erected to view the lists. There were tournaments also at Windsor, Westminster, Canterbury, Eltham and Winchester. At all these places the Black Prince appeared among the challengers. The King of the Scots and the Count of Eu were allowed to take part in the contests, and gained great credit for their performances. King Edward gave lavish gifts of armour, horses, and crimson velvet robes to the victors; he himself occasionally appeared in the lists with the device of a white swan on

his helm, and on his surcoat and shield the quaint design,

“Hay, hay, the white swan
By God's soul I am the man.”

Rich with the booty of France the King and the nobles spent their money right royally. At each tourney they appeared in new robes and new armour. Sometimes clad in the mantles of the Garter, at other times in fantastic shades of velvet; they were only outshone by the extravagance of the ladies of the Court. As one of the old chroniclers writes: “It seemed as if the Golden Age was returned to England; and a new sun began to shine on our horizon: so great riches and plenty, the usual attendants of conquest, being generally diffused over the face of the whole land. For there was scarce a lady or gentleman which had not in his possession some precious household stuff, as rich gowns, beds, counter-pains, hangings, linens, silks, furs, cups of gold and silver, porcelain and chrystal, bracelets, chains and necklaces brought from Caen, Calais and other cities beyond the sea.”

Extravagance of dress was most marked among both sexes. A nobleman of the day never appeared without rich furs, silks, velvets, and cloth of gold. He wore tight clothing round the waist which called forth the reprobation of the moralists of the day. The short breeches which reached but half-way down were met by tight hose, each leg of different hue. The shoes were carried out in points so absurdly long that to allow of

the possibility of walking, the tips had to be hooked up to the knee by gold or silver chains. Like the hose, the coats were parti-coloured : over the coat was flung a mantle of fur or velvet : on the head was worn a silk hood richly jewelled and covered with curious devices : the hair was worn extremely long at the back, though cut close in front : the beard was allowed to grow, but not to any great length.

“Long beards hartlesse :
Gay coats gracelesse :
Painted hoods witlesse :
Make England thriftlesse.”

The ladies, like the men, affected fantastic dresses. Garments divided into two sides of different colours : the petticoat was often embroidered like a herald's tabard, and sometimes was covered by the family coat-of-arms : the head covering was a cone rising to a height of three feet, with streamers of coloured silk flowing to the ground ; but this elaborate head dress did not last throughout the reign. “In these days arose a great rumour and clamour among the people, that wherever there was a tournament, there came a great concourse of ladies of the most costly and beautiful, but not of the best of the kingdom ; sometimes forty or fifty in number, as if it were a part of the tournament ; in diverse and wonderful apparel ; in divided tunics, one part of one colour and one of another, with short caps and bands wound round their head, and zones well bound round with gold or silver ;

and in particular across their bodies knives called daggers; and thus they proceeded on chosen coursers and other well groomed horses to the place of the tournament; and so expended and devastated their goods and vexed their bodies with scurrilous wantonness, that the rumour of the people sounded everywhere; and thus they neither feared God nor blushed at the chaste voice of the people."

While the King and the nobles were enjoying the spoils, wrung from the lords of France, the people at large were equally well off. The plenishings of the homesteads of Normandy, Ponthieu, and Artois more than counterbalanced the heavy taxation of the past years, and save for isolated grumbles the populace gladly gave themselves up to the joys of cock-fighting and bull-baiting. For the more energetic there was the practice of archery at the butts, and games of foot-ball or hand-ball; while in the evening there was dancing and juggling, with an occasional sight of a pageant or play. The actors in these plays were often of noble birth, and the King and the Prince took part in them: they were spectacles rather than dramas, and gay and grotesque dresses formed the special feature of the entertainment. At the King's Plays at Guildford during the Christmas of 1347 there were provided "eighty-four tunics of buckram of divers colours, forty two vizards of divers forms, twenty eight vests, fourteen painted cloaks, fourteen dragons' heads, fourteen white tunics painted with peacocks' eyes, fourteen swans' heads with their wings fourteen tunics ornamented

with stars of beaten gold and silver, fourteen likenesses of women's faces, fourteen likenesses of men's faces with beards, fourteen crests with mountains and conies, fourteen dragons' heads, twelve men's heads and as many elephants' heads, twelve men's heads with bats' wings, twelve wild men's heads, seventeen virgins' heads."

After his return from Calais, the Prince no longer made his permanent home at his father's Court. When not attending tournaments or engaged in business in London, he held his own Court at the Castle of Berkhamstead. The Manor had, since the days of William the Conqueror, been in the royal gift. We find it in Domesday rented at thirteen hides and held by the Earl of Mortaigne, the half-brother of the Conqueror. It came to the Black Prince along with the Duchy of Cornwall on the death of John of Eltham. The castle was pleasantly situated under the eastern slope of the Chiltern Hills, and within reach of the Forest of Epping, and the wooded parts of Buckinghamshire and Berkshire. It was for this reason that the Prince chose it for his headquarters. Like all the Plantagenets, he was devoted to hunting: hawking was his especial delight. King Edward had made elaborate laws for the protection of this royal sport. It was criminal to conceal the possession of any "faulcon, tercelet, laner or lameret (goshawke) or other hawke" which had strayed. The penalty was "imprisonment for two years and yield to the lord the price of the hawke so concealed and carried away, if he hath whereof, and if not, he shall the longer abide in prison."

To Berkhamstead there flocked the young warriors who had won their spurs in the late campaign. The Prince's especial favourites were Sir John Chandos, Sir Henry Eam, and Sir Nele Loryng, all Companions of the Order of the Garter, and his sworn friends. Sir John Chandos for long acted as his Chamberlain and managed his household. Sir Nele Loryng had been appointed to his household in the year 1342, and we find that he "retained Nele Loryng to stay with him for life, for peace as well as for war, and granted him fifty pounds yearly for his fee," and later "for the more sure satisfaction of his fee" he granted Sir Nele for his life the Manors of Nevyn and Purthely in North Wales. Sir Henry Eam also was sworn to his service for life ; but did not join his household till January, 1347, when he received the order of knighthood at the Prince's hands and "of his own free will promised to be attendant unto his service for life, and go with him when summoned whither he would as well in peace as in war, and to be with him in arms at his will against all men, except the Duke of Brabant his liege lord." In return for this promise the Prince granted Sir Henry a rent of one hundred marks a year from the manor of Bradninch in Devon.

When the affairs of the realm necessitated the Prince's presence in London he had his own private house in Fish Street, "a great house for the most part built of stone" in the ward of Bridge Ward Within. The house was still in existence in the time of Henry VIII., as we learn from Stowe's Survey of London, but by then it had become an inn known as the "Black Bull."

Though the Prince was debarred from playing a prominent part in the affairs of the realm, and was compelled to find an outlet for his energies in tournaments and field sports, he had still the means of learning the rudiments of statecraft in the management of his vast estates, which included the Duchy of Cornwall

large part of Devon, the Principality of Wales, the Palatine county of Chester, the Manor of Berkhamstead, and broad lands in Oxford, Surrey, Berkshire, and Kent. To these we must add the Manors in Dorset and Wilts, which, in May, 1348, were granted to him for his life by Joan de Bar, Countess of Warenne. The legal, financial, and social knowledge which the supervision of these huge possessions entailed was an excellent preparation for kingcraft, and ought to have taught the Prince that, prosperous though the country might appear at the moment, there were vital problems to be solved if England was to maintain the proud position she held among the kingdoms of Europe. Lawlessness was once again trying to show its head; taxation was beginning to weigh too heavily on the people at large; and class hatred was on the increase.

Cornwall was always difficult to govern, with its Celtic population, composed of rude miners and seamen, more pirates than traders or fishermen. Many a rich cargo from Bordeaux and Spain was seized by these hungry Cornishmen, and the butts of wine and cases of spices seldom found their way to their destination, be it the King's or the Prince's buttery, or the cellars of some wealthy merchant

prince of the City of London. Again and again we find in the Patent Rolls that the Cornishmen "took away the ship with the wine, as well as customs due to the Prince on the rest of the cargo, after horribly casting out of it the master, mariners and servants, with the servants of the Prince." It was not only piracy that the Prince had to deal with in Cornwall: lawlessness of every kind was brought home to him most acutely, since it affected his revenue. The commission granted at his request on July 30, 1347, will clearly illustrate the difficulties with which he was faced. "Commission of oyer and terminer granted to William de Shareshull, John de Stouford and Hamo de Derworthy on the complaint of Edward Prince of Wales etc. that some evil doers took his parks at Launceseton, Trematon, Rostormel, Leskyret, Kerybullok, Hellesbyry and Lantiglos and entered his free chaces and warrens there, hunted them, fished in his free fisheries there, and at Fowy and Tamar, took and carried away fish to the value of £200, deer from the chaces and parks, hares, rabbits, partridges and pheasants from the warrens and took away two hundred and eight tuns of his wine in the port of Porthid, worth £550 purveyed for his household, and the goods in a ship called 'La Riconburgh de Campe' in the same port: with the ship carried away customs of wool, hides and woolfells, corn and other customable wares taken from the Duchy due to him in the Duchy by the King's grant to the value of £1,000. From the said port and the ports of

Trematon, Loo, Fowy, Falmouth, Muschole, Lenant, Paderstowe and Botircastle took tin not coined or customed thence; and from his stannaries of Fowymor, Blakemor, Kerrier and Penwyth kept back tin which should be coined and customed by Michaelmas in each year, beyond that feast; contrary to the charter of stannary granted to him, whereby he lost the profit of the coinage to the value of £200, and carried away much wreck belonging to him at Seint Ithe: and that the troners of wool and collectors of customs have retained and converted to their own use customs and subsidies received at the ports aforesaid and the town of Seint Ithe to the value of £200, and these collectors and their deputies have by collusion permitted wares to pass uncustomed to the value of £1,000."

It was not only in the wilds of Cornwall that the Prince was faced with the growing spirit of lawlessness; in 1348 at Thane, not far from Berkhamstead, his servants were set on and mobbed, and his provision carts and horses were carried away; in the same year, near Dorchester in Dorset, and at Chalk in Kent, his servants were assaulted and robbed. But the arm of the law could still grapple with such problems. The Prince, caring more for pleasure than business, left these petty annoyances to his stewards and bailiffs, who obtained redress through the courts at Westminster. Accordingly it was with a light heart that he took part in the great festivities in August, 1348, when the Knights of the Garter met in the new

round tower at Windsor, and the King, to celebrate the occasion, founded the new college of canons and poor knights. The accounts of his household give details of the magnificent and costly robes and garters which, on this occasion, the Black Prince granted to his comrades in arms.

At Windsor all was gaiety and pleasure. But the astrologers and those learned in black law foretold, by the motion of the planets, that some calamity was at hand. Throughout the year Western Europe had been visited by torrential rains; at Avignon a pillar of fire was seen standing over the Papal palace; an extraordinary dreadful comet had hung over Paris; from far and near came reports of earthquakes and tempests; in Germany the heavens had rained blood; nearer home, at Chipping Norton, strange monsters, like double-headed serpents with faces like those of a woman and huge wings like a bat, had added to the terror. The visitation was close at hand. At the very moment when the King, the Prince, and the nobles were assembled at Windsor the Black Death appeared at the ports of Dorchester, Southampton, and Bristol. The scourge came from the East. Starting in Central China in 1333, following the trade routes, it reached Europe in 1347, and appeared in Avignon early in 1348. In France it found a ready place in which to germinate. War, followed by famine, had reduced the population to the verge of starvation; sanitation was unknown, and in a few months the plague spread over the whole land.

But soon France took her revenge for the wanton treatment she had received, by passing the disease over to England. In one short year the plague carried off from a third to a half of the population. Strange to say, it attacked the young and healthy rather than the old and feeble. Near akin to the bubonic plague, so prevalent in the East in our day, the disease was marked by dark blotches or boils, especially in the groin and armpits, which were accompanied with a parching fever, spitting of blood, and delirium. The deadliness of the attack, the pestiferous stench of the blood-charged expectoration of the stricken, the absolute inability of the physicians of the day to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunates, and the fatal quickness of infection too often broke down the *morale* of friends and relations. At the first suspicion of disease people fled. The mother forsook her child, the brother forsook his sister. But flight was of no avail. Alike in crowded city and on lonely mountain, in the foul dens of the poor and the airy palaces of the nobles the victims fell before the fatal visitation. At the lowest estimate London lost one hundred thousand of its inhabitants. Norwich was bereft of fifty-seven thousand of its citizens. England lay like a stricken warrior, and the Scots on the northern border rejoiced at her distress and, jeering at "the foul death of the English," mustered their forces to ravage the northern counties. But these preparations were cut short, for the pestilence appeared in their camps in the forest of Selkirk and death stalked abroad in the land breaking all ties of nature, people "flying

from their parents for fear of contagion, as from the face of a leper or an adder."

By the commencement of the year 1349 it was obvious that the country was face to face with a situation which would test to the utmost the wisdom of her rulers. Foreign politics could for the moment be laid aside, for the pestilence lay heavy over all Western Europe and, save for an isolated raid, warfare had ceased for lack of soldiers. But the King, the Black Prince, and the Royal Council had great problems to solve. How, in the face of the general demoralisation and dearth of trained administrators, judges, sheriffs, and magistrates, was the local government of the country to be carried on? What steps were to be taken to allay the panic which seemed universal? On the clergy and the monks the plague had fallen with full fury, showing that they at least had done their duty and stood by the deathbed of many a sufferer. At the moment of their greatest need the people were deprived of those who could best allay their fears by turning their thoughts from material horrors. In a rude age it is impossible to improvise spiritual instructors; the clergy alone held the keys of knowledge, and the Bible was not yet translated into the native tongue.

Luckily for the country the English character, on the whole, stood the test of the strain well and nobly. There was comparatively little of the selfish abandonment which showed itself in Southern Europe, and is so strikingly portrayed in the prologue of Boccaccio's "Decameron." Parliament was summoned for January

1st and again for March 10th, but on each occasion was unable to meet owing to the fury of the pestilence. The Court of the King's Bench was unable to sit, and in many cases the administration of justice ceased, owing to the want of judges to hear the causes. Still, the King and the Prince very wisely set an example to everybody by refusing to alter their manner of living ; they held meetings of the Council in London, and did their best by ordinances to enforce order and law. On St. George's Day, with all due solemnity, the Order of the Garter met at Windsor and gave the populace something to think of instead of merely brooding on the ravages of the disease. But as the summer advanced it became necessary to attempt to deal with the question of wages and the price of provisions.

During the early days of the pestilence, "partly through great abundance, and partly also because through the present apprehension of death, men were less intent upon gain, a good horse worth forty shillings before, might be bought for a mark, a large fat ox for four shillings, a cow for one shilling, a heifer for sixpence, a fat mutton for fourpence, a sheep for twopence, a lamb for twopence, and a pork for fourpence ; one stone of wool for ninepence, and other things went at the same rate." But by midsummer, 1349, all this was altered. Little or no grain had been sown, the beasts and stock had died for want of proper attendance, and labour was excessively scarce. Hence, though the ordinary rate of wages had been twopence a day, a reaper now demanded eightpence and a mower a

shilling and his food. Owing to the scarcity of labourers and the lack of proper tenants, the land-owners were faced with ruin; in the towns the price of food threatened to cause universal starvation.

Mediæval ideas of political economy were vague; the close relation of demand and supply was unknown; but it was an accepted principle that mutual benefit should lie at the root of all bargaining. The market laws invariably contained a clause forbidding forestalling and the withholding of goods to enhance the cost. Accordingly the King and his Council could find no better solution for the difficulty than what is known to history as "The Statute of Labourers." This ordinance enacted that the scale of wages throughout the country should be fixed at the rate of payments in the year 1347—the year preceding the plague—or at the average of the five or six years before, and contained a clause which forbade, under penalty of imprisonment, the demand, or the payment, of higher wages, and assigned punishments to all who refused to labour at these rates.

Economists have heaped the greatest scorn on this measure, pointing out that it was unjust and ineffective. They fail to make allowances for the spirit of the times; they do not consider how intimately this question was bound up with the maintenance of the social fabric on which the State had its foundations. If Edward had acquiesced in the ruin of the landed gentry, on whom could he have leaned for support if they attempted to take the law into their own hands, and remedy their

position? There were only the yeomen and the merchants in the towns. But the interests of the yeomen were too intimately bound up with those of the county gentry to allow of their playing a separate *rôle*, and the merchants were clamouring for cheap food. The people at large had too little stability and self-discipline, or feeling of unity to form a political party; the men of the rural population were little better than serfs, while the poorer inhabitants of the towns were usually an uncivilised rabble. The history of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries proves that the King and his advisers were right in taking the side of the landed gentry, for the nation was not ready for a sudden transference of political power. The Lancastrian constitutional experiment proved there was no other workable alternative to despotism. Edward, however, made the mistake of attempting to fix wages at the level at which they stood when food was cheap, instead of attempting to regulate them in accordance with the advanced price of food in such a manner that the labourers might gain a fair but not unfair reward. In 1351, when Parliament met for the first time after the plague, it gladly accepted the King's ordinance and made no attempt to reverse it during the reign.

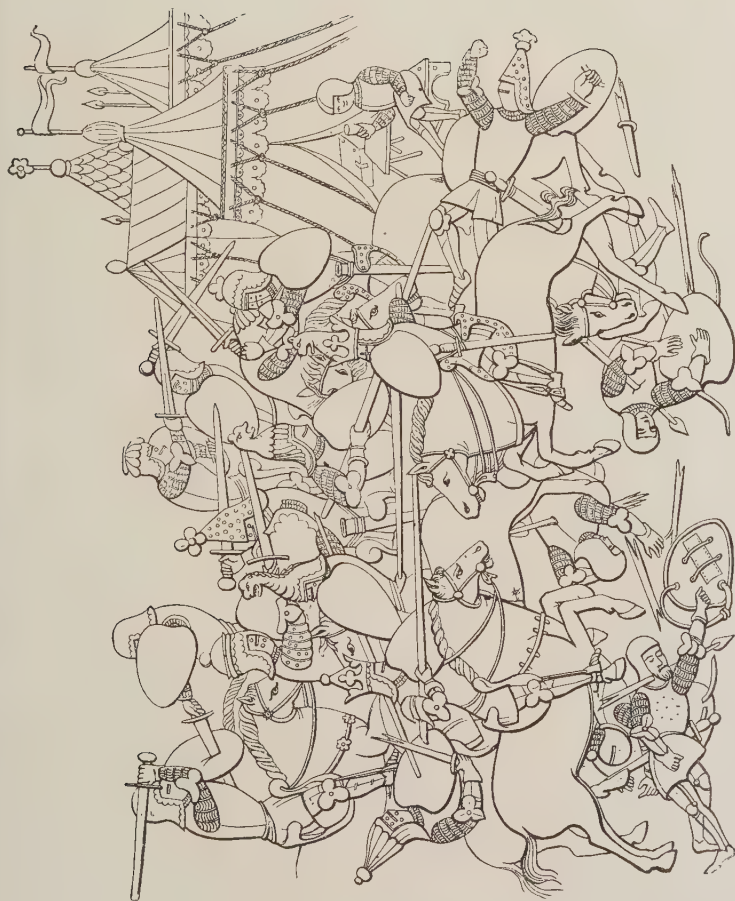
While thus engaged with difficult social problems, the King received news from Calais that the French were attempting to bribe the garrison to betray the town. They had approached Americ of Pavia, a Lombard mercenary, who was captain of one of the castles which formed part of the wall of the town. He agreed to

betray his trust for twenty thousand crowns, and took an oath on the Sacraments that he would perform what he had promised. The details of the plot were carefully arranged: the Castle of Calais was to be handed over to the French on the last night of 1349. But either the plot was discovered or Americ's nerve failed him, and he secretly informed Edward of the scheme. The King decided to meet treachery with cunning. He ordered Americ to remain at Calais in command of the castle, and at the same time he commenced to send over small detachments under the command of Sir Walter Manny to reinforce John Beauchamp, the Governor of the town. Then, just before the end of the year he himself, with the Black Prince and his most trusty knights, secretly left London, hurried to Dover, and crossed to Calais.

The King's preparations were masterly and secret. The French force at St. Omer under Geoffrey de Charny had no inkling that the plot was discovered. There was no unusual stir in Calais: Americ had hoisted the French flag on the morning of the 30th—a sign that his preparations were complete. Still, de Charny was a careful leader, and did not mean to take any unnecessary risks. About midnight on the 31st he arrived outside the town with a force of five hundred lances, and sent forward two squires to reconnoitre. The scouts found Americ awaiting them as arranged, with the news that the road was clear. Thereon de Charny, with the main body, crossed the bridge at Nieulay, and came up close to the town, while at the same time he sent forward Edward de Renti with a bag

containing the twenty thousand crowns, the price of treason, and a force of men-at-arms to take possession of the castle. De Renti's party crept up to the gate, crossed the drawbridge, and entered the courtyard of the castle. Americ received the sack with the words, "Are they all here?" "Yes, by my faith," replied de Renti. "Wait here a moment, then, till I fetch the keys of the city, for I have them ready for you in the castle," replied the faithless Lombard. Scarcely had he spoken when a huge boulder, dropped from the tower above, smashed the drawbridge, cutting off the enemy's retreat, while at the same time a crowd of soldiers at once surrounded them. There was nothing for it but surrender, and the bitterness of the situation was increased by Sir Walter de Manny asking their leader, "Did you think to have the keys of Calais merely for the asking?"

Meanwhile, outside the castle, Sir Geoffrey de Chagny and his men were cursing Americ for keeping them waiting. "What a time that Lombard keeps us waiting here. He'll make us die of cold," grunted de Chagny. "In the name of God," quoth one of the captains, Pepin de Were, "the Lombard's a crafty fellow. He is looking over his florins to see that none are false, and that they are all there." Time went on, and at last the faint glimmer of dawn began to break the darkness. Figures could be seen flitting to and fro, and suddenly the great gates were opened with cries of "De Manny to the rescue!" A band of horsemen issued, among whom were King Edward and the Prince disguised as



CONFLICT OF MEN AT ARMS

knights. "Gentlemen, if you fly we shall lose all," cried out Sir Geoffrey. The French stoutly held their ground, and there being no room to fight on horseback both sides dismounted. During the *mêlée* the King "raging like a wild boar," got separated from the main body. In his excitement, forgetting his *incognito*, he shouted his war-cry, "À Edward St. George, à Edward St. George." At the redoubted name the French recoiled. The Black Prince came hurrying from another part of the field, and fell on the rear of the knights opposed to his father; the French were driven in rout, and de Chagny and many of his comrades were taken prisoners.

In the evening, after the fight, the King entertained his captives with great hospitality. The Prince and the English knights served up the first course, waiting on them, and not sitting down till the second course. After the feast the King approached Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont, the French knight who had most valiantly opposed him in the battle; taking off his own head a magnificent chaplet of pearls, he presented them to him with the words, "Sir Eustace, I give you this chaplet as the best warrior of the day, and I beg you to wear it for love of me, and, seeing you are my prisoner, I give you back your liberty. To-morrow you are free to go whither you will."

The relief of Calais caused intense satisfaction throughout England. The part taken in the achievement by the King and his eldest son fired the enthusiasm of the people; the cunning of the King and

the magnificent bravery of the Prince were the boast of all Englishmen. The ambushade at Calais proved once again that there was no one of his generation equal to King Edward in planning and executing a shrewd blow. It also proved, if proof were necessary, that the Prince of Wales was an unequalled master of the lance, and that he possessed that quickness of eye and coolness during action that are so essential to the successful leader of armies.

After the failure at Calais the French were glad to extend the truce. Philip of Valois disowned all knowledge of de Chargny's expedition. But while professing anxiety for peace, he gladly took occasion of the friction between the English and Spanish merchants to incite the King of Castile to attack England. The Castilians, full of pride, needed but little encouragement, and soon began to talk of an invasion. In the summer of 1350 a great fleet of Spaniards swept up the Channel, capturing and destroying all English merchantmen they met; they then put over to Sluys and shipped cargoes of Flemish cloths and other merchandise. King Edward was furious at being thus bearded in his own domain of the narrow seas. He at once collected a fleet at Sandwich, and awaited the return of the enemy. The might of England flocked to the Cinque Ports, and the King "was never attended by so numerous a company in any of his former expeditions at sea." The Spaniards, on their side, knew that their return home would not be unchallenged; "they knew that they should meet the English, but were indifferent about it; for they had

marvellously provided themselves with all sorts of warlike ammunition, such as bolts for cross bows, canon and bars of forged iron to throw on the enemy, in hopes, with the assistance of great stones, to sink him. When they weighed anchor the wind was favourable for them: there were forty vessels of such a size, and so beautiful, it was a fair sight to see them under sail. Near the top of the masts were small castles full of flints and stones, and a soldier to guard them: and there was also the flag staff from which fluttered their streamers in the wind."

On the 29th of August the English fleet was cruising off Winchelsea on the look-out for the enemy. The King, dressed in a black velvet jacket, with a small black beaver cap, was in the best of spirits. For his amusement Sir John Chandos was singing, to the music of the royal minstrels, a German dance song, which he had taught them, when, suddenly from the masthead came a shout, "Ho! I spy a ship, and it appears to me a Spaniard!" A little later came the news, "I see two, three, four, and ever so many more, so that, God help me, I cannot count them." Immediately the trumpet sounded the alarm, the knights hastened to don their mail; but before they fixed their helmets they had one last pull at the great leather jacks of wine.

The commander of each English ship had his orders, and knew what to do. It was late in the afternoon before the Spanish fleet came to close quarters, bearing down with a fresh east wind. Singling out each an opponent, the English captains dashed into the fray.

The Spaniards were good sailors and fought hard ; but the English, under the eye of the King, were irresistible. The Prince of Wales, courageous as usual, forced his vessel alongside one of the greatest of the enemy's galleons, and was all but sunk ; " his ship was grappled by a great Spaniard, where he and his knights suffered much ; for she had so many holes that the water came in very abundantly, and they could not by any means stop the leaks, which gave the crew fears of her sinking : they therefore did all they could to conquer the enemy's ship, but in vain : for she was very large, and excellently well defended." Luckily, Henry of Lancaster came sweeping by and saw the position. With shouts of " Derby to the rescue ! " he laid his ship along the other side of the Spaniard. Caught between two fires, the enemy were soon mastered ; but only just in time, for hardly had the Prince and his men gained the enemy's deck, when their own vessel sank to the bottom.

The fight of Espagnoles-sur-Mer was as successful as the great sea-fight at Sluys. By evening seventeen Spanish galleons were captured, and the rest had fled in disorder. Edward waited till morning in hope of renewing the combat, but the enemy had crowded on all sail, and escaped in the darkness. On the following morning the King put into Winchelsea, and was received by the Queen, who, with her attendants, had viewed the battle from the cliffs. " The Queen was mightily rejoiced on seeing her lord and children : she had suffered that day great affliction from dearth of news. The day was spent in rejoicing. The King

with those knights who had attended him, passed the night in revelry with the ladies, conversing of arms and amours." The fight at Winchelsea cooled the ardour of the King of Castile, and peace was concluded between Spain and England. Meanwhile, Philip of Valois had died a week before the great sea-fight. The uneasy truce between France and England continued, for the dying King had exhorted his son John to maintain his rights at all costs, but if possible to avoid war. Still, in spite of the efforts of the Papacy, it was found impossible to cement the truce of Calais into a permanent peace.

For the next two years we have little or no record of the Prince's doings, till, in the year 1353, we find him reaping the consequences of the Statute of Labourers. From the commencement of December, 1352, to the middle of March, 1353, the country was visited by an extraordinary hard frost. The bitter cold was ended by a furious hurricane, which did untold damage to buildings and trees. This was followed, from March to July, by a severe drought. Famine ruled the land, and the peasantry, irritated by the attempted regulation of wages, in many places broke out in discontent. In Cheshire they rose in open revolt, and attacked the servants of the Prince who were entrusted with supervising his interests. In the preceding year the men of Buckingham had set on the Prince's servants; but the insurrection in Cheshire was much more serious. Accordingly, in addition to sending Sir Richard Willoughby and Sir William Shareshull, the itinerant justices, to sit in Eyre at Chester, the King was obliged to despatch

the Prince, the Duke of Lancaster, and the Earls of Stafford and Warwick, with a strong force, to restore order and support the judges. Against such an imposing array the men of Cheshire could do nothing, and were glad to compound with the Prince their lord for five thousand marks. On his return from the north, the Prince, with that pious generosity which was a great cause of his continual financial embarrassments, devoted a tenth of the fine to the completion of the Abbey of Vale Royal, begun by his great-grandfather. There can be but little doubt that the Prince's extravagance was the real cause of the revolt in Cheshire. His agents had to screw every penny they could out of the unfortunate peasantry, and this at a time of scarcity, when the social relations between lord and peasant had been strained by the Statute of Labourers.

The King had done his best to aid the Prince in his financial troubles. In 1347 he released him from the payment of the subsidy due from the tin extracted from the Cornish mines, as "he has made divers loans and other provisions therefrom for the necessary expenses of the war in France where he has made continual stay for a year or more." Again, in 1348, he had given orders "to suspend the demand made upon Edward, Prince of Wales, for the portion touching him of the tenth and fifteenth last granted." But in spite of these remissions the Prince could not put his finances on a sound footing. The expenses incurred in attending and providing tournaments, the lavish hospitality he extended to all, the princely gifts of lands, houses,

plate, and furniture which he showered on his friends, and his delight in all games of chance, drained his exchequer and brought despair into the hearts of his Chamberlain and Seneschal. So pressing were his creditors that, in 1350, the King had to "grant to Edward, Prince of Wales, who has made great loans in divers places on account of his retinue of men-at-arms and others for the King's service, and for other charges incumbent on him, whereby he is charged with great debts, that he may freely make his will and that his executors thereof should have free and full administration thereof of the same; and in case he shall die in debt, which be far from him, they shall take all issue of the lands, possessions and lordships now in his hands for one year after his death, together with all that is thus owing to him, towards the discharge of such debts."

Debt was the curse of the Prince's life, from the campaign of Crecy to the day of his death. Thus it was that he whom the nation idolised for his bravery and generosity, who was regarded throughout Europe as the most humane and courteous warrior of the day, was loathed and execrated by his own tenants and peasantry.

CHAPTER IX

AQUITAINE, 1355-56

WITH the year 1355 another period of the Black Prince's life comes to an end. The years of inaction and leisure are passed, and from now onwards his life is full and busy; for foreign politics were to afford him that sphere for independent action which he so greatly desired, but which circumstances had hitherto denied him at his father's Court. From the Peace of Calais, in 1347, up to the year 1354 there had been a nominal truce between France and England; but this official peace was nowhere seriously regarded, and the English and French lieutenants in Artois, Brittany, and Guienne had seized every opportunity to carry on a cruel and desultory war of reprisals. In France, in spite of defeats and disasters, the desire to see the hated enemy driven from the land kept alive, to a certain extent, the war feeling; but in England there were many factors working for the cause of peace. The social agitation arising from the disorders caused by the Black Death, the high prices of labour and of all commodities, and the heavy weight of taxation,

caused the merchant princes, the traders in the towns, and the rural population, to view with dislike the unending war. Edward was far too shrewd an observer not to recognise that the nation no longer supported him in his claim to the French crown. Meanwhile the Pope, Innocent VI., was working heart and soul in the interests of peace. It seemed, then, the best policy to renounce the shadowy claim to the throne of France, if thereby it was possible to retain the substantial fruits of victory. Accordingly, after long negotiations with the Papal Legate, Edward agreed to withdraw his claim to the French crown, on condition he was granted complete sovereignty over Guienne, Ponthieu, Artois, and Guisnes. When these proposals for a definite peace were laid before Parliament, "the Commons with one accord replied that, whatever course the King and the magnates should take as regards the said treaty, was agreeable to them. On this reply the chamberlain said to the Commons: 'Then you wish to agree to a perpetual treaty of peace, if one can be had?' And the said Commons answered unanimously, 'Yea, yea!'" But much as the French also desired peace, their monarch felt that he could be no party to the dismemberment of France, and refused to give up the overlordship of these provinces; accordingly, after long disputes at Avignon, the ambassadors had to break off the negotiations and return home. In a Parliament held at Easter, in 1355, the Commons agreed with the King that the war should be renewed. A great effort was to be made to crush once and for

all the French resistance. Two expeditions were to leave England: one, under the King and the Duke of Lancaster, was to invade Normandy; the other, under the Prince of Wales, was destined for Aquitaine.

Aquitaine, the old inheritance of the descendants of Eleanor, wife of Henry II., had gradually been slipping away from the English. In 1352 Jean, Count of Armagnac, had been appointed Lieutenant of the King of France in Languedoc. Clever and cautious, he had done much to restore French prestige. By the end of 1354 he had captured Saint Antonin, overrun Agenais, Rouergue, Quercy, and actually taken up a position on the Lot close to Aiguillon, only twenty-seven leagues from Bordeaux. The nobles of Gascony, whose interests lay in maintaining the English rule, saw with alarm this steady advance of the Lieutenant of the French King. It was at their entreaties, therefore, that the Prince of Wales was despatched to the south, with the double object of restoring English prestige, and of making a diversion to cover the invasion of Normandy by his father.

All through the summer the winds were contrary and the two great expeditions lay in the ports of the south coast. For forty days the Prince was unable to set sail, but at last, on September 8th, he weighed anchor, and, leaving Plymouth with a fair wind, made a rapid passage. By September 20th he had safely disembarked all his troops on the quays of Bordeaux. The Prince was just twenty-four years old, in the prime of his manhood, and had with him a small but compact

force. He was accompanied by Sir John Chandos, who acted as chief of his staff, and the Earls of Stafford, Warwick, Suffolk, Oxford, and Sir James Audeley, Sir Henry Eam, Sir Nele Loryng, and many of the foremost knights of the day. His force consisted of one thousand men-at-arms, two thousand bowmen, and a large contingent of Welsh spearmen. The troops were well supplied with good armour and bows; thousands of hurdles and fascines had been got ready for crossing swamps and portable bridges for spanning rivers; there were stores of all kinds in abundance. The Prince spent the evening of September 20th playing dice with his friends; but on the next day he entered on his duties as captain-general and deputy for the King in Gascony. At three o'clock in the afternoon, with all due solemnity, in the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, in the presence of the Mayor and notables of the good town of Bordeaux, he presented his credentials. King Edward had stated briefly in his royal letters that he had appointed his son lieutenant in Aquitaine to reorganise the administration of the duchy, and to recover his lost dominions from the hands of the rebels. For this purpose the Prince of Wales was granted plenary power and special authority with all the rights of high, middle, and low justice, to govern the country according to the custom of the land; to promote to ecclesiastical benefices; to reclaim and garrison castles, strongholds, and towns; and to take and administer their revenues; to give pardon to rebels when advisable; to grant for ever, or

for a term of years, estates to the loyal partisans of England ; to supervise all officials, and to see that the revenue of the county was not sequestered by the great nobles, but fairly used for the benefit of the land. After the reading of the royal letters the next ceremony was the taking of the oath of allegiance. John de Stretely, Constable of Bordeaux, read the formula in a loud voice ; the Prince with one hand on the Gospels and the other on the cross, swore that he would be a good and loyal seigneur, would safeguard the rights, franchises, liberties, customs and privileges guaranteed by his ancestors. Thereafter the Mayor and the jurats in like manner with hands on Gospels and rood, and the common folk standing with uplifted hands, swore that they would be good and loyal subjects of the Prince, and would aid him to maintain and to reconquer his rights whosoever might be the attacker.

The Prince was glad when the ceremony was over. He cared little about the administration and government of his province, save from the point of view of how he might gain revenue for carrying on military operations. He was eager to see and confer with the Lord of Pommiers, the Lord of Rosen, and the Lord de l'Espane, "who had come on the deputation to England with promises to help him 'to make good war.'" During the last week of September he held numerous conferences with the great lords d'Albret, de Langoiran, and Jean de Grailly, Captal de Buch. The Prince's idea was to strike at d'Armagnac before the winter set in. With their consent and advice he

AQUITAINE

after

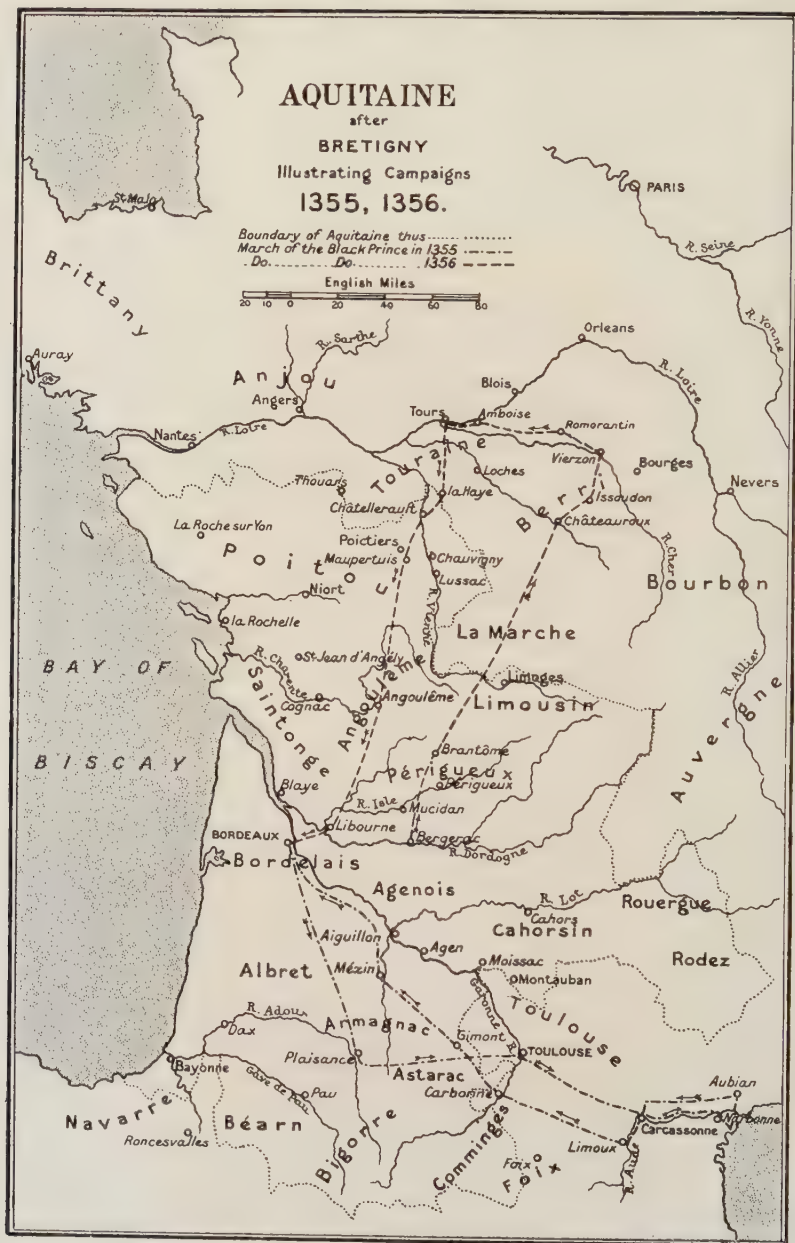
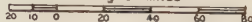
BRETIGNY

Illustrating Campaigns

1355, 1356.

Boundary of Aquitaine thus
 March of the Black Prince in 1355
 Do. 1356

English Miles



fixed on his plan of campaign. He decided that the best way to weaken the resources of the French King's Lieutenant was to make a devastating raid through Toulouse as far as Narbonne, on the shore of the Mediterranean; for from those rich provinces the French King drew a great part of the revenue he devoted to the war. Accordingly, after strengthening the garrisons of his outlying castles, the Prince assembled his forces at Bordeaux. The Anglo-Gascon expedition started on Monday, October 9th, and moved in three columns: the first, composed of three thousand men-at-arms, was under the command of the Earl of Warwick; the second, seven thousand men-at-arms, under the personal command of the Prince; and the third, four thousand men-at-arms, under the Earls of Suffolk and Salisbury; but the numerous servants, bowmen, light-armed horsemen, footmen, and clergy, made up the total number to nearly sixty thousand men. The object and aim of the expedition was to ravage the enemy's country. Burning, pillaging, and destruction marked the track of the army. Moving in a leisurely manner, never attempting siege operations against fortresses which held out, the Prince reached Narbonne on November 8th, meeting with no real organised opposition.

Sir John Wingfield, writing to a friend at home, gives a short account of the campaign: "May it please you to understand that my Lord hath rode through the country of Armagnac, and hath taken many enclosed towns and burnt and destroyed them, ex-

cepting such as he fortified for himself. After this he marched into the Vicomtie of Roseign (Rouergue) where he took a good town called Plaisance, the chief place in that country, which he burnt and destroyed with the country round about the same. This done he went into the country of Estarrac (Astarac), wherein he took many towns and wasted and ravaged all the country. Then he entered the Country of Comminges and took many towns there, which he caused to be destroyed and burnt together with all the country round about. He also took the town of St. Bertrand, the chief town in that country being as large as the City of Norwich. After that he entered the country of Lille (L'Isle) and took the greater part of the closed towns therein, causing some of them to be burnt and destroyed as he passed. Then going into the Lordship of Tholouse (Toulouse), we passed the river of Garonne, and another a league above Tholouse, which is very great. For our enemies had burnt all the bridges as well on the one side of Tholouse as on the other; except within Tholouse itself, for the river runneth through the Town. And within this Town at the same time was the Constable of France, the Marshal Clermont, and the Earl of Armagnac with a great power of soldiers. Tholouse is a city of a large extent, strong, fair and well walled. And there was none in our host who knew perfectly the ford of the river; and yet by the grace and goodness of God we found it. So then we marched through the seignory of Tholouse, and took many good towns enclosed before we came to

Carcassone, which we also took, a town greater, stronger and fairer than York. But as well this as all the towns in the country (which we took) were burnt, plundered and destroyed. Now when we had marched by many journies through the country of Carcassone, we came into the Seignory of Narbonne, which town held out against us: but it was won by force, and the same town is less than the city of London; being situate upon the Greekish Sea, which is not above two leagues therefrom." So far the only real resistance offered had been at Carcassone, where the seneschal Thibaud de Barbazon had attempted to stop the onrush of cavaliers by fixing chains across the streets; for a moment the stratagem was successful and the knights recoiled; but animated by the presence of the Prince, they once again charged the obstacles, broke them down, and vented their rage on the inhabitants. The town was thus captured but the citadel held out, so for three days the lower town was given up to the soldiery and completely sacked: the inhabitants offered a quarter of a million gold crowns as a ransom, but the Prince was implacable, and on the third day gave the town to the flames. Narbonne like Carcassone was divided into two quarters, the upper and the lower towns. The lower town, better built than Carcassone, according to Baker the Chronicler, surrendered without a blow. Almeric, Viscount of Narbonne, held the upper town or city with a garrison of five hundred men-at-arms. Relying on the walls and ramparts he refused to surrender. For a day and a half the

English attempted to storm the stronghold, but were beaten off by the cannon and other military engines of the besieged. It was in this combat that they lost a considerable number of men, the only casualties incurred during the whole campaign. The upper town held out, and for three days the Black Prince lay at Narbonne in his quarters in the Monastery of the brothers of the Blessed Mary of Carmel; then, after setting fire to the lower town he started off north on his homeward march. Meanwhile all Provence was panic-stricken, each town expecting the fate of Carcassone and Narbonne. The town of Avignon was only some thirty leagues distant, and the Pope himself feared a visit from the English army. Accordingly he sent off in hot haste a Papal officer with the demand for a safeguard for two bishops, whom he despatched, with the hope of arriving at some solution of the quarrel between France and England. The Papal officer came up with the Prince's army at Aubian; but the Prince, fearing a stratagem to entangle him in negotiations, while his enemies might surround him, refused an audience to the sergeant. Sir John Wingfield had intimate knowledge of the matter. "And may it please you to understand that our Holy Father sent messengers to my Lord, who being not past seven leagues from him (really twenty seven) sent a sergeant at arms, who was sergeant in attendance at the door of the Holy Father's Chamber, with letters to my Lord, requiring of him a safe conduct, to come and declare to his Highness their

message from the Holy Father, which was to treat of an accommodation between my Lord and his adversary of France. But the sergeant was two days in the army before my Lord would vouchsafe to see him or read his letters. The reason thereof was, because he was informed that the Power of France was come forth of Narbonne toward Carcassone: whereof my Lord was obliged to turn back on them presently, as he did. But the third day, when we expected to have met them, they, understanding of our approach, retired before day and got them to the mountains, marching hastily toward Tholouse. But the country people who had been their guide to lead them that way, were taken by us, as they should have passed the water. At which time, because the sergeant at arms was in my custody, I cautioned him to examine the guides; and because one of the guides so taken had been the Constable's guide and his countryman, he might both see and know the countenance of the French upon this his examination: and I told the sergeant that he might the better declare to the Pope and all those at Avignon, what he had now heard and seen. But as to the answer which my Lord returned to those who had sent to treat with him, you would be hugely pleased if you knew all the matter: for he would not suffer them to approach his person any nearer; but he sent them word by their sergeant, 'that if they came to treat of any matter they should send to the King his Father.' For my Lord himself would not do anything therein, but by the command from my Lord, his Father."

The Prince continued his march, taking good care to give a wide berth to his original route, so that he might ravage as much of the country as he could in the time at his disposal ; moreover, he was extremely anxious if possible to bring the Count of Armagnac to an engagement in the field, for this reason he followed the French in their retreat through the mountains.

The pursuit was arduous, and to add to the difficulties the drought, which had hitherto assisted the expedition by enabling the troops to ford the numerous rivers they encountered, now caused a water famine. The scarcity of water mattered little to the soldiers, for the plunder of monasteries and towns caused wine to be the drink of all ; but it fell very hard on the horses, who had to carry their masters or the heavy loads of booty over the steep, rocky tracks through the mountains. Since water was unattainable the horses were given wine to drink, with dire results. The food of the troops was cooked in wine and olive oil. The French reached Toulouse before the English could get up with them. To ford the river in safety, the Prince marched past the town and crossed the Garonne at Carbonne, some leagues above it. While encamped there at midnight he was awakened by the news that the French army under Armagnac was issuing from Toulouse. Accordingly he sent off a small force under Sir John Chandos, Sir James Audeley, and Lord Burghersh to reconnoitre, who falling in with



PORTRAIT OF EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE

AFTER A CONTEMPORARY FRESCO ON THE EAST WALL OF THE CHAPEL OF ST. STEPHEN'S,
WESTMINSTER, DESTROYED BY FIRE IN OCTOBER, 1834

the enemy's advance guard, two hundred strong, attacked it and carried off thirty prisoners. The rout of the advance guard carried panic to the main body, and on the next day the Prince once again took up the pursuit. At Gimont, on November 22nd, the French again showed signs of fight, but fled during the night, and the Prince thereon contented himself with escorting his heavy trains of plunder to Bordeaux, which he reached without further adventure, saving the burning of a few towns, on December 9th, after one of the most successful and daring raids recorded in history.

The Prince had just cause to be pleased with his expedition; he had once again established the prestige of the English arms in the south, and he had crippled the resources of his adversary for many a day to come. Let Sir John Wingfield sum up the results of the campaign. "Now my Lord rode over the country eight whole weeks, whereof he rested not above eleven days, in all those places whither he came. And know for certain that since this war first commenced against the French King, he never received such loss and mischief, as he has in this last expedition. For the countries and good towns which were laid waste at this time supplied the French King every year, to the maintenance of the war, with more than half his realm hath done besides; except the charge of his money which he maketh every year, and the profits and customs he taketh of the Poictevins, as I can show you by the records, which were found in divers towns in the Collec-

tors' houses. For Carcassone and Limouse, which is as great as Carcassone, and two other towns in the coasts of Carcassone, paid to the French King yearly wages for one thousand men-of-arms and one hundred thousand old crowns to maintain the war with. And know, that by the records which we found, the town of Tholouse, which we have destroyed, together with the towns in the country of Carcassone, and the towns of Narbonne, with others in Narbonnois, did together with the towns aforesaid, find him every year to the aid of his war, four hundred thousand old Crowns into his coffers : as the Mayors of the great towns and the other people of the country, who are supposed well able to know, told us. Whereof by God's assistance, if my Lord hath wherewithall to maintain this war, to the King his Father's profit and his own honour, he should greatly increase the English Power and win many fair places : for our enemies are wonderfully astonished."

When the Prince arrived at Bordeaux he heard that the other expedition under the King and Lancaster had landed at Calais instead of in Normandy, and after some success had been withdrawn, owing to an invasion of the Scots. Accordingly, the French were able to turn their forces against him. In addition to this he had at once to take measures to resist the war of reprisals, which was certain to follow on the injuries which the raid had caused to the inhabitants of the southern provinces. For not only were they smarting under the loss of rooms full of carpets, and draperies, and caskets and chests full of beautiful jewels, the burning of mills,

the devastation of vineyards, but at Mont Giscan and elsewhere Froissart tells us "there was a great persecution of men, women and children, which was a pity." It was certain that during the winter months the French would make some attempt to retaliate. Accordingly, the Prince despatched his most trusty lieutenants, Sir James Audeley and Sir Reginald Cobham, to watch the valley of the Garonne. The Captal de Buch, the Lord of Montferrand, the Lord of Crotoin and Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh were sent north to hold the important fortresses of Cognac, Taillebourg, Tonneins, and Rochefort, with orders to beat up the French posts in Anjou and Poitou, while the duties of guarding the valleys of the Lot and Dordogne were entrusted to the Earls of Suffolk, Oxford, and Salisbury together with the Lord of Mussidan. The Prince himself, when not at Bordeaux, had his headquarters at Libourne, a central position whence he could hurry to the assistance of any of his lieutenants who needed support. The scheme of defence was excellent, for not only were the French incursions checked, but during the minor operations which took place in the early months of 1356 the net gain of the English was five fortified towns and seventeen castles. Sir John Chandos secured the safety of the Garonne valley by the capture of Chastel Sacrat, and bearded the Count of Armagnac at the strong town of Agen. Sir John Wingfield wrote a description of the situation and explained to his friend Sir Richard Strafford how, after taking the place by assault, "The Lords John Chandos and James Audeley remain still

with their troops in Chastel Sacrat, and have plenty of victual of all sorts to serve them between this and midsummer ; except only fish and cabbages, as they have by letter advertised us. . . . And they have ridden before Agen, and burnt and destroyed all their mills, and fired or broken down all their bridges that lie over the Garonne, and have taken a castle without the same town and have fortified it. And moreover John d'Armagnac and the Seneschal of Agenais, who were then in the town of Agen, would not once put forth their heads, nor any of their people, and yet have they been twice before the town."

Meanwhile Warwick supported Sir John Chandos on the line of the Garonne, and did untold damage to the French partisans by destroying their vines.

While his lieutenants thus held the frontier the Prince was busy with details of administration and plans for regaining the duchy. The long connection between England and Bordeaux was really based on the commercial claims of that city, whose interests were bound to those of the English by the fact that the prosperity of Bordeaux depended on her export trade. It was for this reason that the Prince's first duty after seeing to the safety of the frontier, was to undertake the issue of a new gold coinage similar to that which his father had established in England. The effect of this measure was to simplify considerably transactions between the merchants of Bordeaux and those of England. While still engaged in this business the Prince received letters from home dated January 13, 1356. The tenor of these

letters showed that King Edward was anxious lest the energetic measures of the Prince and the raid to Narbonne might bring upon Aquitaine the whole might of France. Accordingly, while warning him to be careful, he once again granted him full power to negotiate and to treat when possible. The Prince, however, was confident that he was strong enough to deal with a high hand, and urged his lieutenants to further exertions. Early in February the Pope attempted to enter into negotiations with him to buy the safety of Périgueux, a town which was the property of the Count of that name, a brother of Cardinal Talleyrand de Périgord. But the Prince would not hear of such a transaction, for Périgueux belonged to the Duchy of Aquitaine. Accordingly he wrote to his Holiness: "The King of England, my father, is rich. I can dip my hand into his treasury when I will. I have no wants. I refuse to spare Périgueux at the price of silver or gold. But I shall most assuredly accomplish the task I am here to perform, which is to punish, discipline, and tame by my arms those people of the duchy who have rebelled against my father." This boast was not vain, for a few days later the Captal de Buch pulled down the French flag from the tower of Périgueux. The success of the English arms and the capture of numerous castles and seigniories brought difficult problems to solve. Unfortunately the Prince was better in the field than in the council chamber, and followed a policy which was fatal to the best interests of the duchy. He passed over to adventurers, or granted to his captains, the

strongholds and revenues of the captured provinces, making them responsible for the maintenance and pay of the garrisons and the repairs of the fortifications. These new seigneurs had no tie of interest to teach them to respect their new subjects ; they knew that, so long as they fulfilled their military obligation, there would be but little inquiry into their conduct, and accordingly they set themselves to wring every penny they could out of the unfortunate peasants and townsmen entrusted to their care.

During the winter the French were elaborating their plan of campaign for the following summer ; they were convinced that the Prince would pursue the policy of raiding. To meet such a scheme they decided to hold certain fortified positions, and await an opportunity to attack the English raiding columns and overwhelm them. Early in March minute orders were sent to ensure the safety of the chief towns of Poitou and Touraine. At Tours six special commissioners were appointed to supervise the erection of fortifications. For Poitiers an elaborate system was devised : " During hostilities only three gates of the town should be open : at each gate there should be an inspection post of ten of the prominent citizens, who should examine all the people coming or going : the inn-keepers and proprietors of their shops must not hold in pawn either the arms nor servants of soldiers : each inhabitant must have before his door a large cask, full of water, and during the night a lighted candle."

Meanwhile, at Bordeaux, the Prince and his advisers

had as yet settled on no definite plan of action. Sir John Chandos, the Prince's right-hand man, had hitherto been distinguished mainly for his extravagant gallantry and deeds of knightly valour. The responsibility of high command, while checking in no degree his desire for individual distinction, at the same time, thanks to his great common sense, developed those latent qualities which were to win for him the reputation of the best diplomatist and soundest soldier of the day. It was fortunate for the Prince that he had such an adviser, for the Crecy campaign, the ambushade at Calais, the fight of Espagnoles-sur-Mer, and the raid into Provence were as yet his only experience of service. He still regarded war as a mere sport in which he might gain individual glory and honour, and as an easy means to win those riches which his generous character taught him to lavish on his friends. But Sir John, though brought up in the school of Edward III., could read the inward lessons of his many campaigns. In addition to a quick eye for the tactics of the battle-field, he had the necessary breadth of view to understand the elements of strategy. Accordingly he was delighted when orders arrived from England for a combined attack on the French from Brittany and Aquitaine. Preparation for the campaign was facilitated by the adhesion to the English cause of many of the Gascon nobles, who had hitherto held to the French. The great seigneur, the Lord of Caumont, Jean de Gaillard, Lord of Limeuil, Gaillard de Durfort, Lord of Grisnois, and Bertrand de Durfort came over and made their peace with the Prince.

A combined movement is always a difficult operation necessitating as it does rapid communication between the different forces, and an exact calculation of time and distance. Circumstances compelled the Duke of Lancaster to commence his advance before the Prince's preparations were complete. The first information the Prince received of this advance was in June, when he learned that the King of France had hurried off to Normandy. It was July 6th before the Prince could leave Bordeaux, and even then the threatening attitude of the Provençals compelled him to waste precious weeks in the valley of the Dordogne. When, at the end of the month, he was in a position to advance, though he did not know it, the opportunity was gone, for Lancaster had retreated towards Brittany.

After a strong force had been detailed to hold the southern border, and to garrison the various strongholds, the Prince had left at his disposal for his advance to the north three thousand five hundred men-at-arms, two thousand five hundred mounted archers, and one thousand light troops, of which the mass of the archers were English, the majority of the men-at-arms Gascon. It was a small force with which to brave the King of France; but sufficient, in the opinion of Sir John Chandos and his lord, for the object they had in view, which, as the Prince explained in a letter written to the Mayor of London, was to make a diversion to help King Edward who, he understood, was crossing over to Normandy. "Our intention was to make a raid into France, we took our route by the countries of Périgord

and Limousin, and marched straight towards Bourges where we expected to find the son of the King, the Count of Poitiers. The real reason we chose that line of advance was that we expected to hear news of our Lord and Father the King." Unfortunately the King was unable to cross over to France. It was impossible to send letters in time to stop the Prince's advance, so, though he did not know it, he started to meet the might of France with some seven thousand men.

CHAPTER X

POICTIERS

THE Prince left Bergerac on August 4th, and commenced his famous march to the north. Moving at a steady three or four leagues a day, so as not to tire his horses and men, he swept over the rich provinces of Central France. Quercy, Limousin, and Berri paid dearly for their faithfulness to the French monarch. Brantôme, Bellac, Lussac, Argenton, and Châteauroux lay smoking and ravaged. But, thanks to its walls, Bourges escaped. "They found the county of Auvergne, which they had entered and overrun, very rich, and all things in great abundance; but they would not stop there as they were desirous of combatting their enemies. They burnt and destroyed all the countries they passed through: and when they entered a town which was well provisioned, they rested there some days to refresh themselves, and at their departure destroyed what remained, staving in the heads of wine casks that were full, burning the wheat and oats, so that their enemies could not save anything." At Vierzon on the Cher the expedition reached the limits



ATTACK ON A CASTLE

of the old Duchy of Aquitaine. There, on August 28th, news arrived that King John was rapidly assembling an army at Châtres, and that all the bridges on the Loire had been destroyed. A few hours later the activity of the enemy was confirmed, when the Prince's advance-guard fell into an ambush. Gris Mouton, the leader of the levies which King John had pushed south of the Loire to watch the English, had laid his plans cleverly. The vanguard of the English advance-guard rode unsuspectingly through the trap. The moment they had passed the French fell on them from the rear. Completely taken by surprise, they lost several prisoners and all their booty, and were only saved from destruction by the arrival of the main-guard under the marshals. Thereon the enemy rode off and, hotly pursued, took refuge in the Castle of Romorantin. When the Prince heard of this skirmish he was furious. Regardless of the fact that the enemy at Châtres was now ready to move, and that prudence recommended a hurried retreat, he determined to avenge his fallen comrades by capturing the small handful of fugitives who held the castle. Remonstrance was of no avail ; he merely answered the argument that the King was only ten leagues distant by replying that he desired a pitched battle above all things. For five days the castle held out. The Prince exposed his person with the utmost gallantry, but the besieged defended themselves stoutly, hurling down huge stones and pots of hot wine on their assailants. At last, by means of Greek fire, the castle was all in a blaze, and the gallant handful of Frenchmen were

forced to surrender, "because they could not well extinguish the flames with the small quantity of wine and water, which was all they found in the keep."

From Romorantin the Prince pushed westward, and on September 8th sat down before Tours, as he wrote, "being informed that all the bridges on the Loire were broken down and that it was impossible to cross anywhere, we took our route straight to Tours and halted four days outside that town." Tours was too strong to be taken by assault. While uncertain what to do next, the Prince heard, on September 11th, that the day before, King John and his army had crossed the Loire at Blois, thirty miles to the east. The situation was alarming, for if the enemy managed to reach and occupy the gap of Poitiers before them, the English would be cut off from the direct line of retreat on Aquitaine, and forced to abandon their plunder, and to march off home by the more difficult and mountainous routes. Prince Edward at once broke up his camp and, marching steadily, by the 14th reached Châtellerault on the Vienne, without meeting any trace of the enemy. There he halted for two days, seemingly confident that the enemy had given up the pursuit.

The English lack of precaution is unintelligible. It is true that in mediæval times scouting was a lost art; we read again and again of the success of the most simple ambushes. But what happened seems almost beyond belief. On the evening on which the Prince reached Châtellerault the enemy occupied his camp of the preceding evening at La Haye, and on the next day

marched due south to Chauvigny, without getting into touch with him. The only solution of the mystery seems to be, that the English were confident that they had escaped their pursuers, and that their success had made them neglect the ordinary military precautions, while the hostility of the peasants prevented their getting any accurate information. For the French, however, we cannot advance this plea, as the country folk were on their side, and Froissart definitely states that the English army "was constantly observed by able and expert knights." It seems clear therefore that King John avoided his enemy on purpose, either because he was not yet strong enough to fight him, or because he wanted to outmarch him and cut him off from his retreat through the gap of Poitiers, and thus ensure his complete rout and the recapture of all the booty.

Still unconscious of the proximity of the foe, the Prince marched from Châtellerault on the morning of the 17th. His road lay along the left bank of the Vienne. At La Chaboterie the English advance-guard came suddenly into contact with the enemy's rearguard; for a few hours earlier the main body of the French had crossed the Vienne on their way from Chauvigny to Poitiers. From prisoners the Prince at last learned that the King of France was in front of him. But the French were equally surprised at the appearance of the English. On this occasion at any rate the French scouting was as bad as that of their enemy, for their rear-guard was completely surprised and routed with

considerable loss : moreover, by moving so far to the west as the city of Poitiers they had uncovered the road to Aquitaine. The Prince saw an opportunity of escape. "He collected all the stragglers and ordered that no one, under the pain of death, should advance or skirmish before the battle of the Marshals. They marched on this Saturday from about nine o'clock until vespers when they came within small leagues of Poitiers." The Prince had learned his lesson and carefully observed his enemy. A strong reconnoitring force under the Captal de Buch pushed right up to the main body of the enemy near Poitiers, and reported that "all the plain was covered with men-at-arms."

By using a country road the English, on the morning of Sunday, the 18th, safely skirted Poitiers and reached the little village of Maupertuis, some seven miles south-east of the city, and secured their line of retreat. Here they were compelled to halt, for the long march of the previous day had worn out their heavily laden horses. It was certain that they would be too tired to make such an effort on the following day, and even if they had been fresh, impeded as they were with huge wains filled with booty, they could not move at a greater pace than three miles an hour. The Prince had no intention of giving up the profits of his raid without a fight, and he addressed his staff, exclaiming, "God help us, we must consider which will be the best means to fight them most advantageously."

The French took good care not to let the enemy escape them ; their scouts kept close touch with the foe.

Scarcely had the Prince posted his men in the position at Maupertuis ere the news was sent back to the King, who was marshalling his host outside the city "very impatient to combat the English." Mounted on a white palfrey, King John rode at the head of his army, after haranguing his troops and telling them, "You men of Paris, Châtres, Rouen, and Orleans have been used to threaten what you would do to the English if you could find them, and wish much to meet them in arms; now that wish is gratified, I will lead you to them; and let us see how you will revenge yourselves for all the mischief and damage they have done you: be assured we will not part without fighting." Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont, the leader of the reconnoitring party, rode up to him and reported, "Sire, we estimate the enemy at about two thousand men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and one thousand five hundred light troops, they are arrayed in a very strong position, and they seem massed in order of battle, and right skilfully too, for their archers are ranged behind hedges and bushes on either side of a road, which you must ascend in order to attack them, and only four men-at-arms can move up it abreast. At the top of this passage, amid vines and brushwood, where it is impossible to ride or march, are ranged their men-at-arms with archers in front of them, in the form of a harrow, and all on foot, and we can only come to them by discomforting their archers—a thing difficult to achieve." "How, then, do you advise we should attack them?" asked the King. "Sire, on foot, except three hundred

horsemen well armed and mounted to disperse their archers and clear the way for the men-at-arms."

On the recommendation of Sir William Douglas, who had seen much warfare against the English on the Border, King John agreed to the plan of battle proposed by de Ribeaumont. The cavalry, except a picked body of horsemen under the two marshals, was dismounted, and the knights were ordered to take off their spurs, and to shorten their lances to five feet. While the line of battle was being reformed, after these preparations were complete, the Cardinal de Périgord came up at full gallop from Poitiers, and entreated the King to allow him to try to persuade the Prince to surrender. "Sire," he said, "you have here the flower of knight-hood of your kingdom against a handful of people, such as the English are compared to your army; you may have them upon other terms than by a battle. . . . I therefore beseech you, in all humility, and by the love of God, that you will permit me to go to the Prince, and remonstrate with him on the dangerous situation he is in." King John gave his assent, and the Cardinal hurried off to the English lines. "The Prince neither feared nor refused peace." He recognised the danger in which he stood: short of provisions, his troops and baggage train tired out by the forced march of the preceding day; opposed by enemies who outnumbered him more than three to one; accordingly, after listening to the Cardinal's proposals, he replied, "Sir, my own honour and that of my army saved, I am ready to listen to any reasonable terms." The delighted Cardinal rode back

to the French army and persuaded the King, against his better judgment, to grant a truce till sunrise on the following day.

All day long the Cardinal rode from one army to the other trying to arrange terms acceptable to both ; but in vain. For there was a party in the French King's Council, composed of Marshal d'Audenharn, Sir Geoffery de Chargny, and Sir William Douglas, who bitterly opposed any terms save those of absolute surrender. The Prince, on his side, was willing to go so far as to surrender all the towns and castles he had captured on the expedition, to give up without ransom all his prisoners, and to restore the booty. This proposal was contemptuously rejected, and a message was sent that "if the Prince of Wales and a hundred of his knights did not surrender themselves prisoners to the King of France, he would not allow them to pass without an engagement." Thereon the English commissioners, the Earl of Warwick, the hoary-headed Earl of Suffolk, and the Prince's trusted comrades the Bartholomew Lord Burghersh, Sir James Audeley, and Sir John Chandos, left King John's red silk tent, where all day long they had conferred with his representatives. French and English alike cursed the Cardinal, who they thought had betrayed them.

The truce so far favoured the French that they were stronger by a thousand men, but it had also given the English soldiers and horses the much-needed rest. Accordingly the Prince made his dispositions for the following day with a view to flight or battle, as the

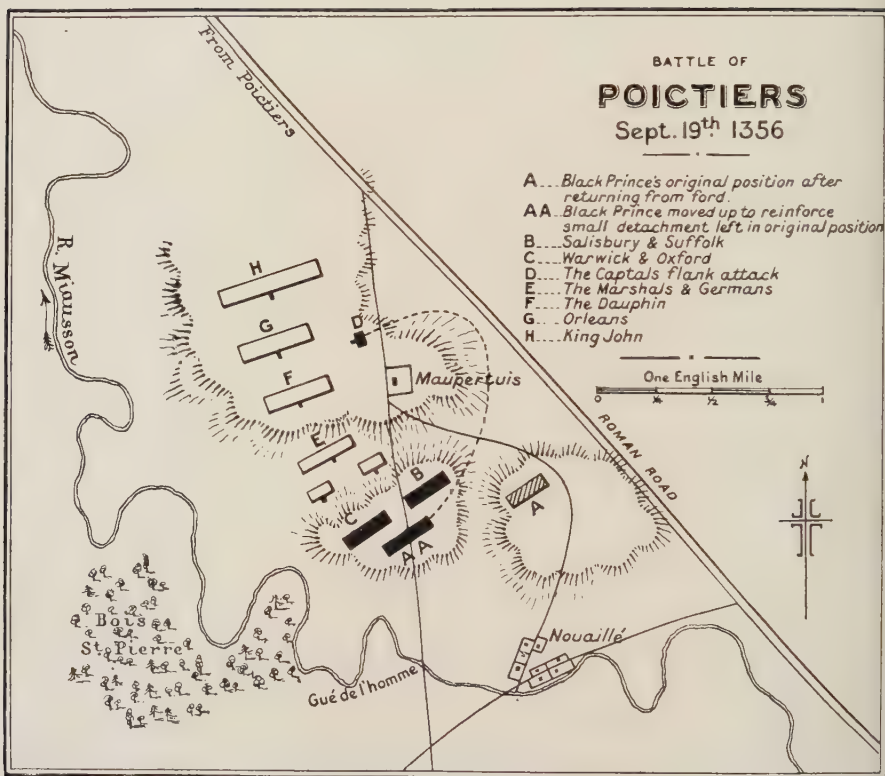
opportunity occurred ; but he was far too good a leader to allow his men to have any inkling of his intentions. Despondency was already appearing in the Anglo-Gascon host, but the Prince dissipated it by a fiery speech, telling his archers, " Your manhood hath been alwaies known to me in great danger, which showeth that you are not degenerate from true sonnes of English men, but to be descended from the blood of them, which hitherto fore were under my father's dukedom and his predecessors, Kings of England : with whom no labour was painful, no place invincible, no ground impassable, no hill (were it never so high) inaccessible, no tower unscaleable, no army impenetrable, no armoured soldier or whole hosts of men were formidable. This lusty courageousness tamed the Frenchmen, the Ciprians, the Syracusians, the Calibians, and the Palestinians and brought under the stiff-necked Scots and unruly Irishmen, yea, and the Welshmen also, which could well endure labour." He finished his oration by assuring them that, if fortune went against them, the knighthood of England would die with them, for, said he, " Be ye sure that your names shall not want eternal fame and heavenly joy, and we also with these gentlemen our companions, will drink of the same cuppe that you shall doe."

Thereafter, with Sir John Chandos, he carefully reviewed the situation ; they both came to the conclusion that it was just possible, if the enemy delayed their attack on the following morning, a retreat might be effected without loss. The Prince, as he stated in

BATTLE OF
POICTIERS
Sept. 19th 1356

- A... Black Prince's original position after returning from Ford.
AA... Black Prince moved up to reinforce small detachment left in original position
B... Salisbury & Suffolk
C... Warwick & Oxford
D... The Captains flank attack
E... The Marshals & Germans
F... The Dauphin
G... Orleans
H... King John

One English Mile
0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1



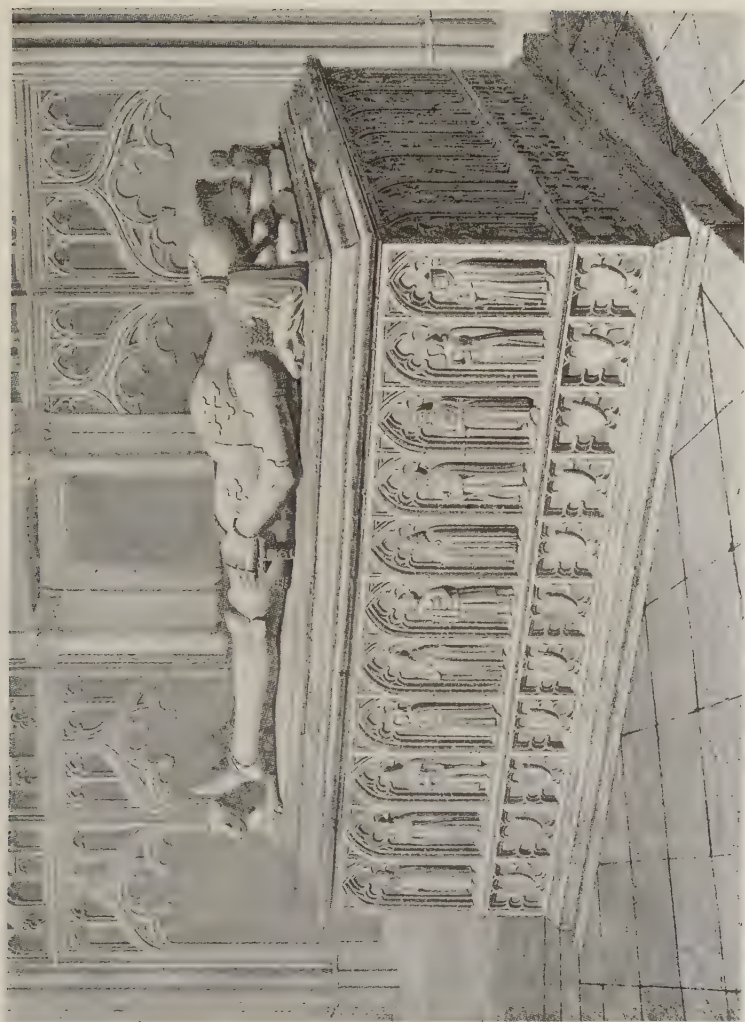
his letter to the Mayor of London, determined to try and get away, "because of want of provisions, and for other causes it was agreed that we should pursue our way and withdraw before them in such a manner that, if they wanted battle, and came up with us in any place which was not greatly to our disadvantage that we should hold it."

The position occupied by the English army on the Sunday evening was a plateau facing north ; on the east it sloped down to some low, swampy ground, across which lay another similar plateau covered with vines and scrub ; on the west lay the valley of the Miausson. Across the northern slope of the plateau ran a hedge, which terminated in the marsh on the east ; while on the west it sloped right up to the top of the hill, where there was a gap, caused by a cart track, with hedges on both sides leading to the fields, occupied by the English camp. South of the camp lay the ford of the Miausson called the Gué d'homme, across which ran the road to Bordeaux. The Prince's scheme was to hold the hedges along the front of the plateau with the rear-guard under Salisbury, until the advance-guard, under Warwick, followed by the baggage and plunder train and the main-guard under his own command, had crossed the Gué d'homme. After the passage of the main body Salisbury was to fall back quickly, and if too hardly pressed battle was to be offered on the steep wooded slopes of the Bois de Pierre, on the south-west bank of the Miausson.

"The Prince put his men in order, and willingly

would he have avoided an action if he could have managed it. But he saw well what he had to do. . . . Accordingly, he summoned the Earl of Warwick, gave him charge of the van and said to him, 'You shall first go over the passage and take our baggage in charge ; I will ride after you with my knights, that if you meet with any mishap we may reinforce you ; and the Earl of Salisbury shall follow behind and lead our rear battle. Let each be upon his guard, and in case the French fall upon us, let every man dismount as quick as he can to fight on foot.' " To cover the retirement completely, in case the French had been working south-east the Prince detached a part of his division to occupy the hill, thick with scrub and vines, which lay across the marsh to the east of Salisbury's position.

Warwick commenced his retreat at daybreak, and safely crossed the Miausson with the baggage. The Prince himself had started to withdraw, when news arrived that Salisbury was being attacked. The French scouts had caught sight of the retreating banners, and had sent word to the King and marshals. Prince Edward, on receiving this despatch, at once sent word to Warwick to reinforce Salisbury, and himself hastened off to support the part of his division which had been left to hold the isolated hill on the right. But the French marshals had directed their main attack on the cart road, which led to the place where the English tents had been pitched. Thus it was that the first brunt of the battle fell upon the rear-guard and vanguard, and the Prince's division played the part of a



TOMB OF THOMAS BEAUCHAMP, EARL OF WARWICK

reserve. To Salisbury fell the first honours of the day, for the earliest assault was parried "long before the vaward could be turned and pass back to them, for it was already beyond the river."

On the French side the King had drawn up his forces as on the preceding day, in accordance with the advice of de Ribeaumont and Douglas the Scot. The rear-guard, or forlorn hope, was composed of three hundred mounted knights, under the two marshals Clermont and D'Audenharn ; its duty was to break the English line at the gap, and thus allow the dismounted columns which followed to penetrate into the position. The first battle followed close after, composed of some two thousand cross-bowmen and a considerable body of foreign men-at-arms, some of whom retained their horses, making in all a force about four thousand strong. The second column was commanded by the Dauphin, the Duke of Normandy, and mustered some four thousand men-at-arms. The third battle was led by the Duke of Orleans, the King's brother, and contained about three thousand men-at-arms. While the reserves under King John himself, with the flower of the knighthood of France, mustered some six thousand men-at-arms. Professor Oman estimates that, including cavalry, foot soldiers, and archers, the King of France had some twenty thousand fairly trained troops to oppose to the Prince's seven thousand. But though the French thus outnumbered the English by about three to one, their army, composed as it was to a great extent of purely feudal levies, could not compete in discipline and efficiency with the semi-regular

troops of the Anglo-Gascon force ; while there was no comparison between the leaders of the armies. The French King commanded in person, and was supported by his great feudatories, who despised the advice of more soldierly but less noble warriors like de Ribeaumont and Douglas the Scot. They scorned the idea of attempting to starve out their enemies, which Douglas suggested. They blindly accepted the suggestion of fighting on foot, without understanding that it was the combination of archers and dismounted men-at-arms which had gained the English their successes. When the order to attack was given, the full effect of the forlorn hope was lost. For one marshal taunted the other with cowardice, and, instead of making a concentrated effort, the attack was scattered all along the English line. Thus it was that Salisbury alone easily beat it off, for his archers had no difficulty in shooting down the horses.

The attack of the first battle, composed of archers and German men-at-arms, was just commencing when Warwick returned in the nick of time. He at once continued Salisbury's left down to the Miausson ; and that able soldier the Earl of Oxford pushed his archers up the river's bank, so that they enfiladed the attacking columns, while, owing to the morass by the river, the enemy were unable to come to close quarters. "By this time the force and heat of battle began to be in prime, when as the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury, like fierce lions, endeavoured of purpose which of them should dung the land of Poyters most with Frenchmen's blood." But scarcely had the foreigners been repulsed,

when the Duke of Normandy's battle appeared on the scene. As at Crecy, orders had been given that there should be no pursuit; so Warwick and Salisbury had their men well in hand, ready for this fresh attack. Meanwhile the Prince, retaining some four hundred picked men on the hill to watch his right flank, moved up the rest of his division to support the Earls. The struggle along the hedge was fierce and long, but at last, thanks to the close shooting of the archers, the Dauphin's attack was driven back, carrying away in its rout the column of Orleans which was coming to its support.

The English leaders at once re-formed their ranks, only a few hot-headed young knights like Sir Maurice Berkeley galloped in pursuit of the discomfited Duke of Normandy, and were taken prisoners. It was fortunate indeed that the cowardly flight of the Duke of Orleans' men gave the English a breathing space. "In the meantime our men carried those which were wounded out of their camps, and laid them under bushes and hedges out of the way; others, having spent their weapons, took the spears and swords from those whom they had overcome; and the archers, lacking arrows, made haste to draw them from poor wretches that were but half dead: there was not one of them all but was wounded or quite wearied with great labour, except four hundred men who kept the chief's standard and were appointed to meet the French King."

Meanwhile King John had seen with fury the ill-success of the "battles" and the cowardice of his

brother of Orleans. But the fight was not yet lost; his own column now more than equalled the whole Anglo-Gascon force. Consequently he had good hopes that he would still retrieve the day, and he paid no heed to those who cried out, "My lord, the field is fallen to the English," but commanded his banners to advance. When the English saw this fresh host approaching, they felt that the crisis had come at last, and many were dismayed. One of the Prince's staff actually called out, "Alas! we poor wretches are overcome." But the Prince's courage was still undaunted, and he turned on the coward saying, "Thou liest, thou dastardly fellow, for thou canst not say we be overcome as long as I live." Meanwhile, after a hurried consultation with Sir John Chandos and the Captal de Buch, he gave his orders. At Sir John's advice he determined to meet King John by a counter-attack, so, calling up his last reserve of four hundred men-at-arms from the right flank, he massed the rest of his force behind them. Then at the suggestion of the Captal, he entrusted him with one hundred archers and sixty men-at-arms to make a diversion against the French rear. Thereafter, calling out to Chandos, "John, go forward; you shall not see me turn my back this day," he gave the word to his standard-bearer, Sir Walter Woodland, "Banners advance, in the name of God and St. George."

So the Prince and his men charged down the hill under cover of the fire of their archers, and the French met them with a cloud of quarrels from their cross-bows; soon both sides were locked in a hand-to-hand

conflict, and the English archers, having shot their last arrows, regardless of the fact that they bore no defensive armour, rushed into the fray, hacking at the men-at-arms with their swords and daggers. So the combat swung backwards and forwards, "the worthy Prince of Wales cutting and hewing the Frenchmen with a sharpe sworde." Meanwhile the Captal de Buch and his little company had pushed unseen through the hillocks and thickets on the right, and unperceived reached a small hill on the French rear. There he suddenly displayed the banner of St. George. The Prince caught sight of the ensign and called on his comrades for one more effort, and dashed "into the middle of the throng, and where he seeth the most company, there he layeth about him on every side." The appearance of the Captal decided the day; the French King was dismayed by the sight of this foe in the rear; the English responded to the calls of the Prince, who made desperate efforts to capture King John with his own hands. "Then should you have seen the antient beginning to reel and stumble, the banners of them to fall down: the blood of slaves and princes ran mingled together into the waters which were nigh. In like sort the Earl of Cornwall rageth, who seeketh to have none other way to the French King's standard than by blood only." But he was not destined to succeed in his desire. King John fought valiantly, aided by his young son Philip, a youth of twelve, who watched his foes, shouting, "Father, guard to the left, guard to the right." Refusing to fly, the gallant King was gradually swept backwards and

at last surrounded by a crowd of foes, he yielded to a knight of Artois, Sir Dennis de Morbecque, demanding to be led to his cousin the Prince of Wales.

Meanwhile the English pressed the pursuit and the flying Frenchmen were driven right back to Poitiers. The Prince, seeing that the battle was won, now ordered his standard to be planted on a conspicuous spot and the rally to be sounded. His first thought was for the King of France. The commanders of the different divisions had no definite news of him. The Earl of Warwick said, "Sire, he is either dead or taken, for he would not flee." The Prince thereon despatched two knights in search of him: they found King John surrounded by a wrangling crowd, all of whom claimed to be his captors. "Gentlemen," said the unfortunate monarch, "bring me to the Prince my cousin and cease your wrangling, for I am powerful enough to satisfy all your claims." At that moment the Prince's *aides-de-camp* arrived, and putting an end to the unseemly dispute conducted the King to the Prince, who received him with every mark of courtesy, and desired to assist him in taking off his armour. But King John refused this honour, "Good kind cousin desist, for I have no claim to this: for by the faith I owe you, you have to-day gained more honour than ever Prince had in one day." To which the Prince replied, with all humility, "Kind sir, it is the work of God, and not mine: so ought we to thank Him, and to pray with all our heart that He will give us His grace and pardon this victory."

Meanwhile the heralds were busy counting the number

of the slain. The Prince was extremely anxious about the fate of his friend Sir James Audeley. Early in the engagement he had demanded to be allowed to do some special deed of daring, for as he said, "I made a vow that if I should be engaged in any battle where the King your father or any of his sons were, that I would be foremost in the attack and the best combatant on his side or die in the attempt." The Prince had graciously granted him his request. "Sir James, God grant that this day you may shine in valour above all knights." During each phase of the combat Sir James and his four squires had been conspicuous, but after the last *mêlée* they were no more seen. The Prince, who was mourning his friend as dead, was delighted to hear that he was only badly wounded; he hurried off to him to tell him, "Sir James, I and all the rest of us claim you the bravest knight on our side in this battle," and to mark his appreciation granted him a yearly income of five hundred marks. A few days later the Prince heard that Sir James had promised this annuity to his four faithful squires, who had watched over him during the battle. The Prince, not to be outdone in generosity, at once granted him another five hundred marks.

When the heralds returned from counting the dead and prisoners the Prince was at last able to grasp the full extent of his victory. There lay dead on the field of battle two thousand knights and men-at-arms, and five hundred bowmen and foot soldiers. They included Marshal Clermont, Gaustin de Brienne, Duke

of Athens and Constable of France, the Duke of Bourbon, Robert Durazzo, cousin of the King of Naples, Geoffery de Chargny of Calais fame, the Bishop of Châlons, and others. The prisoners included, besides the King of France and his son Philip le Hardi, the Counts of Eu, La Marche, Longueville, Tankerville, Ventadour, Auxerre, Vaudemont, Sancerre, Dammartin, Vendôme, Nassau, Saarbrücken, Joigny, and Roussy, together with the Archbishop of Sens, Marshal d'Audenham, ten more bannerets, and two thousand five hundred others, of whom nineteen hundred and thirty-three were knights and men-at-arms. That is to say, that the French lost dead and prisoners about one-fourth of their numbers. There is no return of the English losses. Lord Burghersh in his despatch puts them at the impossible total of four men-at-arms and sixty others, but probably sixteen hundred is nearer the true total. It was impossible to escort such a number of prisoners and the enormous train of plunder; accordingly the great majority were dismissed on the spot under promise to pay their ransom by a fixed day, but the King and the more important were not so released.

The battle of Poitiers shows the Black Prince at his best both as a soldier and a man. In the presence of his enemy he could grasp the salient parts of a problem with lightning rapidity. From the moment his advance-guard came in touch with the enemy at La Chaboterie his dispositions were cleverly and masterfully carried out. The forced march by which he attempted to get ahead of his pursuers; the position

which he occupied at Maupertuis ; the skilful use of hill, hedge, marsh and river ; the way in which he attempted to draw off on the morning of the battle ; the clever disposition of the rear-guard under Salisbury ; the stern way in which he kept his men in hand and refused to allow the ranks to be broken after each successful resistance ; the courage with which at the end, throwing in his last reserve, he suddenly assumed the offensive and hurled back King John with his stubborn counter-attack ; the masterly diversion created by the Captal, and above all the example he gave of personal courage and devotion, are enough to prove how great was his own share in the battle. It is true, no doubt, that he had in Sir John Chandos a chief of the staff without comparison in those days ; that his divisional leaders Warwick and Salisbury were great soldiers ; that Sir James Audeley, the Earl of Oxford, the Captal de Buch, to mention but a few, were men of tried courage and renown. But to choose one's subordinates is one of the attributes of a great soldier, and we must remember how heavy a burden of moral responsibility the Prince had to bear. However good his advisers were, he had ultimately to accept the responsibility of every action.

Again, we cannot fail to be struck by his humility in the hour of success, and his kind-hearted anxiety for his friends, comrades, and soldiers. But though his kindness and courtesy were such as to single him out among the princes of his day, he could be stern when necessary, nay, savage. Seeing among the dead

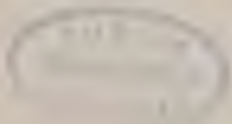
on the battle-field the corpse of Sir Robert de Duras, a nephew of the Cardinal Périgord, who, as belonging to the Cardinal's suite, had no business in the fray but ought to have remained neutral, he sent him to the Cardinal saying, "I salute him by this token." Finding among the prisoners another member of the Cardinal's suite, he would have had him beheaded if Sir John Chandos had not pointed out, as was the case, "that the Cardinal may excuse himself so well, that you will be assured he was not to blame."

The battle of Poitiers was one of the hardest fought battles of the Hundred Years' War. It lasted from prime to vespers. As one chronicler points out, "In old times men could tell, after the third or fourth or at the outside the sixth pull of the bow, with which side victory would lie; but at Poitiers a single archer fired a hundred arrows, and without hurry, and still neither side yielded." There is no doubt, then, that the French fought on the whole stubbornly, and it was only the "battle" of the Duke of Orleans which showed the white feather. The French, in their chagrin, rather unjustly blamed their seigneurs, and cast at them reproaches of sloth and treason. The English, on their side, attributed their success to the direct influence of God. Meanwhile in many towns placards appeared bearing this legend, "The Pope is French, but Jesus is English. The world may now judge which is the stronger, the Pope or Jesus."

On the evening of the battle, according to the custom of the day, the Prince gave a feast to his chosen

comrades and to the most illustrious of his captives. With kindly feeling he tried to lessen the gloom that had settled on King John, saying, "You have this day acquired such high renown for prowess that you have surpassed all the best knights on your side. I do not say this to flatter you, for all those of our side who have seen and observed the actions of each party, have unanimously allowed this to be your due, and decreed you the prize and garland for it." Later still, perhaps a little unkindly, he asked the King "Good cousin, had you taken me as I, by the mercy of God, have taken you, what would you have done with me?" To this King John, remembering his order to give no quarter, made no reply.

The feast lasted till late at night, and early next morning the Prince put his army in motion, and, marching past Poitiers, made his way by easy stages to Bordeaux. For encumbered with booty and prisoners, he was in no condition to make use of the strategic advantages afforded by his victory. In this he was right, for as he saw, he had in the person of King John a most powerful lever for bending the people of France to his father's will. Once the army arrived in English Aquitaine they were rapturously greeted. "At Bordeaux they were nobly received and welcomed by all the people. With crosses and processions and chantings of orisons, there came to meet them all the college of Bordeaux, with dames and damsels, old and young, with serving-girls. Such rejoicings were there at Bordeaux, so may God gladden my heart, that it was marvellous to behold."



CHAPTER XI

TREATY OF BRETIGNY AND THE PRINCE'S MARRIAGE

THE Prince spent the winter of 1356-57 at Bordeaux, amid great splendour. Money was plentiful, owing to the ransoms paid by the distinguished prisoners. King John was lodged at the Abbey of St. Andrew and treated with the greatest consideration and respect, scarcely a day passing on which there was not some tourney or entertainment got up for his special benefit. Meanwhile the Pope was doing his utmost to bring about peace between England and France. As soon as he heard of the result of the battle of Poitiers he sent to Bordeaux two envoys, the Cardinals Périgord and St. Vitalis. The choice of Cardinal Périgord was unfortunate, for the Prince had not forgotten that members of his suite had been found amongst the prisoners and the slain; still, he was open to reason, and after the Cardinal had apologised and explained that he could not control these hotheads, Prince Edward put the matter on one side and allowed the ambassadors a hearing. While

from a personal point of view he welcomed the idea of an understanding with France, on one point he was firm—that he could not entertain any proposition which had not been first approved of by his father. Still, when the envoys returned with this answer the Pope recognised that a step had been gained, and he expressed his thanks to the Prince in the following letter: “Our reverend brother, Tallyrand, Bishop of Alby, Nuncio of the Apostolic See, wrote unto us by his letters, that you confirming and enhancing the nobility which you derive from your stock by your generosity of soul, and the exercise of virtues, have entertained him with such honours and such favours as become a son to exhibit to his Father in Christ. And that (which is greater than all these), preparing your mind equally for all events, and not being puffed up by any prosperity of success, but always more humble in the sight of the Lord your God, attributing all unto Him from whom you have received all, you do graciously allow unto our dear son in Christ, John, the illustrious King of France (whom the events of war have brought into your prison), that honour which belongs unto so great a prince. Upon which account returning unto your Highness our deserved praises, and hoping undoubtedly that the Omnipotent God, who hath respect unto the lowly but humbleth the proud afar off, will bestow upon you more absolutely and fully the Grace of His benediction, etc. Dat. Aven. V. Non. Octob. Anno. Pontif. IV.” The result of the negotiations was not entirely satisfactory; no basis for a lasting peace was found,

but the French were glad to accept the terms which King Edward was willing to offer, and on March 23, 1357, thanks to the intervention of the Pope, a two years' truce was concluded between the Prince on behalf of his father and the Duke of Normandy on behalf of France; this truce was to include the allies of both monarchs, and to commence on April 9, 1357, and last till April 21, 1359.

King Edward recognised that he held in King John an instrument for extorting what he required, more potent than the best-equipped army. By now, being no longer absolutely dependent on his Flemish allies, he was quite willing to waive his claims to the French throne, provided he gained the absolute lordship of Aquitaine, without any feudal restrictions. But King John could not yet brace himself to surrender his rights over Aquitaine. Accordingly, early in March, Edward ordered the Prince to bring his prisoner home to England, and preparations were made at Plymouth for his reception. But the Prince was unable at once to carry out this command. There were rumours that the French were preparing two fleets to intercept him on his passage and to recapture King John; moreover, the Gascon nobles thought that they had been mainly instrumental in his capture and were unwilling to allow him to depart from Bordeaux. The Prince was extricated from this dilemma by the advice of Sir John Chandos, who, from his intimate acquaintance with the Gascons, knew that it was simply a question of money. After much haggling the nobles of Gascony were

content to allow the Prince to transfer his prisoner to England, after receiving the princely sum of one hundred thousand florins.

The King of France left Bordeaux towards the end of April under a strong escort, and landed at Sandwich on May 4th. The Prince courteously allowed his prisoner two days' rest before proceeding to Canterbury; there a halt was made, and the King of France joined his captor in making offerings at the shrine of Thomas à Becket. London was reached on the fourth day, and the unfortunate King of France had a trying experience. The crowds were so dense that, although London Bridge was crossed at nine o'clock in the morning, it was after midday that the procession reached Westminster Palace, where the Prince handed over his august prisoner to the King.

For the progress through London the Prince, with that desire for scenic effect which was so marked in his character, had mounted King John on a nobly caparisoned white charger, while he himself rode a little black hackney; behind them came a thousand citizens on horseback richly dressed in broadcloths and velvets. The affectation of humility delighted the populace, who were immensely proud and fond of the Prince. His extravagance did not fall directly on them as it did on his tenants. The gorgeous pageants and tourneys which he organised were not only a cause of endless delight, but brought money to their pockets. The wealthy citizens, indeed, were charmed by the Prince's affability, and though they had

often qualms as to whether they would ever see the broad pieces they had lent him, they consoled themselves by the thought that his estates could not run away, and that meanwhile his victories were securing new markets on the Continent; for these burgher magnates were great believers in the doctrine that trade follows the flag. So the Prince kept open house at his mansion in Fish Street, while the King of France, after a short sojourn at the Savoy Palace, was sent to Windsor to consider the question of his ransom.

Once again the Prince found himself in the same unfortunate position as before his expedition to France. Gaiety succeeded gaiety; as the Chandos Herald wrote: "There was the noble powerful King with the Queen his wife, and his mother, whom he held right dear; they caused many a dame and damsel, very lovely, frisky and fair, to dance and hawk and hunt, and make great festivities and jousts, as in the reign of Arthur for the space of five years or more." Debarred from an active part in politics, immensely popular and still unmarried, his temptations were many, his occupations few. It is probably after the Poitiers campaign that the Prince's two bastard sons, Sir John Sounder and Sir Roger Clarendon, were born. But these were not his only illegitimate children, for we find an entry in his accounts prior to January, 1349, of how he presented a horse called Lyard Hobyn "to his own little son Edward." Meanwhile his extravagances increased day by day, and he lavished gifts on his

friends and retainers. It was doubtless only right that he should liberally reward those who had done him such good service at Poitiers. Sir John Chandos received lands and money; Sir Nele Loryng, for services in Gascony and notably at Poitiers, was granted the sum of £403 6s. 8d.; Sir James Audeley on the field of battle was endowed with an annuity of five hundred marks. Be it said also to the Prince's credit that it was not only his familiar friends who received these acknowledgments for their valour. We find that he granted to one William Linch, "who lost one eye at the battle of Poitiers," the ferry of Saltash in the county of Cornwall, and an annuity of £20.

Against such gifts nothing can be said, but his daily extravagance was appalling. He was constantly presenting horses to his friends and to strangers visiting his Court. The accounts are full of such notices: "A war horse called Bayard Bishop to William Montacute." "A war horse called Morel More to Walter Paveley." "A hobby called Dun Crump to a German knight." "A sumpter horse called Morel with a white off hind to Richard of Bikenfield." Gifts of armour were also a great drain on his resources. "To Sir Henry Eam a haubgeon and basinet." "To Sir Hugh Wrottesly a set of plate armour covered with black velvet." "To Sir James Audeley a haubgeon." "To Sir John Chandos three basinet." To Sir John Sully "a pair of iron gauntlets." "To Sir William Trussell a set of mail for his charger." Before or after every tournament such gifts were distributed with a lavish hand.

The Prince also had a nice taste in jewels, and bought them freely for himself and his friends. We find him constantly indebted to Andrew du Meer, merchant of Gascony, and others for Oriental rubies and big diamonds. Gold and silver cups quaintly enamelled, and jewelled belts are the presents he gave to his lady friends. At the New Year the Royal Family used to exchange gifts. We find the Prince sending to the King, his father, a gold enamelled cup. To the Queen, his mother, a large goblet set with three rubies and emeralds. Churches, chapels, and all sorts of religious institutions came in for the Prince's benefactions. We find the Bishop of Winchester receiving a tabernacle of gold silk with a picture in enamel of Daniel between two lions in the lower half, and above a representation of the Blessed Virgin Mary sitting with her Son. Innumerable were the richly woven altar cloths, Eastern rugs, chasubles, and vestments of all sorts which he presented to the various churches in which he was interested. While the temporal needs of the clergy were not forgotten, as is shown by entries such as "to Sir William Mugge dean of Windsor one ton of wine."

The Prince placed all that he possessed at the disposal of his friends, and we still can read how he made minute arrangements that Sir Walter de Paveley might have the fish in the tanks of his manor of Newport, and sixty live conies from his warren at Aldebourne. But it was the constant tournaments at Windsor, Smithfield, and Berkhamstead, and the enormous expense for entertainment which they in-

volved which did more than anything else to cripple his resources. In April, 1358, a magnificent tournament was held at Windsor, and a free pass was given to all foreign knights for three weeks. The unfortunate King of France watched these lavish entertainments and was heard to moan, thinking of his ransom, "That he never saw or knew such royal show and feastings without some after reckoning of gold and silver." In May, 1359, after the marriage of John of Gaunt, another costly tourney was held in London. There the King, the Prince, and their chosen friends held the lists as challengers against all comers. Greatly to the delight of the citizens, the King appeared as mayor and the Prince as the senior sheriff. Accordingly, when war broke out in August, 1359, the Prince was again forced to appeal to his father for help. The King promised his son's creditors that, if he fell during the campaign, his executors should hold all his estates for four years for the payment of his debts.

The cause of the outbreak of the war was that the Dauphin refused to accept the treaty of peace which his captive father had made with King Edward. No sooner had King John arrived in England than the Pope despatched an embassy to try and arrive at some definite solution and peace. After two years' agony the unfortunate monarch at last signed a treaty handing over in full sovereignty all Western France from Calais to Bayonne. When the Dauphin refused to ratify these concessions, Edward determined to make one last great effort to crush the spirit of France. He had all along

suspected that the Dauphin would refuse to accept the terms, and consequently from the beginning of the year war preparations had been unostentatiously carried on in England. Carpenters, miners, masons, and artificers had been warned early in January. Sailors were quietly mustered in the ports for manning the royal vessels; no less than a hundred being necessary for the ship, the *New St. Mary*. Once again the English responded to the call to arms. As Froissart puts it, "There was not knight, squire or man of honour, from the age of twenty to sixty years that did not go; except those whom the King and his council ordered to remain to guard his castles, bailiwicks, mayoralties, seaports, havens and marches."

Owing to the devastated condition of France it was necessary to carry supplies for this great host. Millstones were provided for grinding corn, ovens for baking bread, forges for shoeing horses, small portable leathern boats, with many more things that "had never before been taken with an army." Six thousand four hundred wagons were sent over to Calais to provide the commissariat and baggage train. The total strength of the English army, including the division sent ahead under Lancaster to cover the great dépôt round Calais, was probably about thirty thousand men—more than sufficient to overthrow any armed force the French could put into the field. In addition to this, Flanders was full of adventurers of all nations who had come to sell their swords to King Edward. These adventurers added to the difficulty of the campaign, since they came pre-

pared to live on what they could capture, and had to be kept quiet by a raid into Picardy, organised by the Duke of Lancaster, before Edward himself arrived in France.

It was not till between daybreak and sunrise on October 28th that the King, accompanied by his four sons, Edward, Lionel, John, and Edmund, embarked at Sandwich in the *Philip* of Dartmouth. They reached Calais that same evening, and the next morning they started to march on Rheims, the holy city of France, where Edward had determined to have himself crowned as King. The advance-guard was composed of five hundred men-at-arms and one thousand bowmen; it was accompanied by five hundred pioneers, whose duty it was to open out the roads and allow the huge convoy to pass. The King himself led the main body, composed of three thousand men-at-arms and five thousand archers; then came the baggage train covering six miles of road, and last of all the Prince of Wales's division consisting of two thousand five hundred men-at-arms and a considerable body of archers. In spite of the fact that no formed body of Frenchmen was likely to oppose them, the English marched in strict battle formation, and, owing to the bitter racial hostility and the prowling bands of guerillas, "they did not leave even a boy behind them without waiting for them." Consequently the day's march never exceeded twelve miles. Very soon the difficulty of provisioning this huge force compelled the King to alter his arrangements, and accordingly he ordered the Prince to march

by St. Quentin, while he himself went by Arras and Cambrai, keeping Lancaster's force as a connecting link between himself and the Prince.

When the three columns at length concentrated under the walls of Rheims they found it too strongly fortified and garrisoned to take by storm. "The King of England was not desirous of storming it lest his army should suffer too much from wounds or fatigue." Accordingly, he determined to attempt to starve out the garrison. The King established his headquarters at St. Waal and the Prince at St. Thierry. Bad weather and shortage of provisions were the lot of besieger and besieged. "The earls, barons, and knights were quartered in the neighbouring villages to Rheims, so that they were not very comfortable, nor had they weather to please them: for they had arrived there in the depth of winter about St. Andrew's day, when it was very rainy: their horses were badly housed, hardly treated, and ill-fed, as the whole country was so destroyed, . . . there was such scarcity of corn of all sorts, many were forced to seek forage ten or twelve leagues away."

The army suffered considerably during the rigours of the siege of Rheims. At last, on January 11th, the King, owing to the difficulty of getting provisions, was forced to raise the siege. In spite, however, of this lack of any solid military advantage, the Prince and his companions thoroughly enjoyed the campaign, for they looked on war almost entirely from the point of view of the knight-errant of the Arthurian legends. The

foraging parties were extremely popular, as they gave the individual knights an opportunity of personally challenging the knightly keepers of the various small fortified towns, and many were the feats of arms performed by Sir John Chandos, Sir James Audeley, Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, Sir Eustace d'Abrichecourt, Sir Henry Eam, and others of the Prince's military household.

After his failure at Rheims, the King determined to have recourse to the measures which the Prince had used in the south, and see if he could subdue the country by systematically ravaging it. From Rheims the English turned to the fertile province of Burgundy, marching to Châlons, then to Bar-le-duc, and thence westward to Troyes, eating up the country as they went, halting wherever they came across provisions as at Tonnerre, where they remained for five days "on account of the good wines" they found there. Thus, on the whole, in spite of the weather, the army suffered comparatively little during the early spring. "I must informe you," writes Froissart, "the King of England and his rich lords were followed by carts laden with tents, pavilions, mills, and forges, to grind the corn and make shoes for their horses, and everything of that sort that might be wanting. For this purpose there were upwards of six thousand carts each drawn by four good and strong horses which had been transported from England. Upon these carts also were many vessels and small boats, made surprisingly well of boiled leather: they were large enough to contain three men, to enable them

to fish in any lake or pond, whatever might be its size ; and they were of great use to the lords and barons during Lent ; but the commonalty made use of what provisions they could get. The King had, besides, thirty falconers on horse back, laden with hawks : sixty couple of strong hounds and as many grey hounds : so that every day he took the pleasure of hunting either by land or river." Thus the army swept over the country in three divisions, each with their own vanguard and rear-guard about a league apart.

Meanwhile, in March, the French made an expedition across the Channel, landing at Rye and devastating Winchelsea. On hearing of this the King determined to try and bring the war to a close by capturing Paris. On arriving at Bourg-la-Reine he sent his heralds to the city to challenge the Duke of Normandy to battle outside the walls. But the Dauphin would not throw away his advantage, and Paris was too strong to take by assault, too great to blockade. Accordingly, the English turned south and made towards the valley of the Loire. Meanwhile the Dauphin despatched envoys to treat for peace. The King and the Prince refused all terms save the absolute surrender of the county. But during the negotiations an awful thunderstorm took place, many men and horses being killed by the enormous hailstones. "Behold," cried the stricken host, "the judgment of God for our sins." Moreover, the wise and statesmanlike Duke of Lancaster threw all his weight against the war party. "My Lord," he urged, "this war, which you are carrying on in the Kingdom

of France, is wonderful to all men and not too favourable to you ; . . . if you persist in continuing the war it may cost you your life." So the King went to the church of our Lady at Châtres, "and religiously vowed to the Virgin that he would accept the terms of peace."

The Treaty of Bretigny was a definite attempt to settle all outstanding quarrels between the rulers of France and England. Edward was recognised as sovereign lord of Guienne and Gascony, of Ponthieu and of Calais ; in return for this he waived all his rights to the crown of France, and all feudal claims over Normandy, Touraine, Anjou, Maine, and Brittany.

King Edward left France before the full terms of the Treaty were concluded ; he entrusted the work of supervision of details to the Prince. Soon after his return home the Prince was sent to escort King John, with all pomp, to Calais, where he was to remain till a fixed portion of his ransom had been paid. In October he recrossed to Calais with his father and witnessed the transfer of King John to his subjects. On his return journey he stopped six days at Canterbury, paying his devotion to the Trinity. Then followed the usual succession of gorgeous tournaments, and the Prince spent his time between hunting at his Castle of Berkhamstead and attending the gaities of the Court from his house in Fish Street. By now he was thirty years old, and it was time for him to think of securing an heir to carry on the line. His brother, John of Gaunt, was happily married to the daughter of the Duke of Lan-

caster, and had the expectation of succeeding to the vast estates of that duchy. But the King and Queen, while content to allow their third son to marry the daughter of a subject, had more exalted ideas for their eldest son. However, the Prince, so dutiful in other respects, had his own ideas about marriage. He had long been fond of his cousin, Joan of Kent, the wife of Sir Thomas Holland, and as early as 1348 we find an entry in his accounts for "a silver biker to his cousin Jeanette."

On December 28, 1360, Sir Thomas died in France, where he was engaged in handing over to the French certain strongholds under the terms of the Treaty of Bretigny. A few months later, to the annoyance of his parents, the Prince announced his intention of marrying the young widow. Joan, known to later history as the Fair Maid of Kent, was two years older than the Black Prince. She was the younger daughter and third child of Edmund of Woodstock (the brother of Edward II.), who was beheaded in 1330. Queen Philippa took charge of her, on the deposition of Isabella and Mortimer, and brought her up at Court, where she was "*en son temps la plus belle de tout le royaume d'Engleterre et la plus amoureuse.*" Her youthful beauty attracted the desire of both the Earl of Salisbury and Sir Thomas Holland, but Holland forestalled his rival by a contract and cohabitation. No doubt there were certain indiscretions which added to the dislike of the King and the Queen for this marriage. But the Prince was set on it, and accordingly, after a Papal dispensation had been obtained, the

espousal was celebrated on October 6, 1361, at Lambeth, by Simon Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury.

One of the French chroniclers gives a most circumstantial tale as to how this marriage was brought about. He relates how, on the death of Sir Thomas, in vain many noble warriors came and asked the Prince to speak on their behalf to the Countess. How one named Monsieur de Brocas, who had seen much service by the Prince's side, at last prevailed on him to press his suit. The Prince went to see his cousin; but she would not listen to the suit of de Brocas, and maintained that she would never marry again. And then the chronicler says: "She showed herself a lady of great subtilty and wisdom. For the Prince was enchanted with her and said to her, 'Ah, my dear cousin, is it the case that you refuse to marry any of my friends in spite of your great beauty? Although you and I are of the same lineage, there is no lady under heaven that I hold so dear as you.' Thereon the Prince became greatly enamoured of the Countess. And the Countess commenced to weep like a subtle and far-seeing woman. And then the Prince began to comfort her and kiss her passionately, grievously distressed at her tears, and said to her, 'I have spoken to you on behalf of one of the most chivalrous Knights of England and one of the most honourable of men.' Madame the Countess replied in tears to the Prince, 'Ah, Sir, before God do you not talk to me thus. For I have given myself to the most chivalrous Knight under heaven, and for love of him it is, that before God I will never marry again as

long as I live. For it is impossible that I should have him to my husband and my love for him parts me from all men : it is my intencion never to marry.' The Prince was extremely curious to know who was the most chivalrous Knight in the world, and pressed the Countess to tell him. But the Countess the more she saw him aflame, the more she begged him to make no further inquiry and said to him, ' Before God, my very dear Lord, by His agony, by the sweet Virgin Mother, suffer it to be so.' To make a long story short, the Prince told her that if she did not tell him who was this most chivalrous Knight in the world, he would make him his deadly enemy. Then the Countess said to him, ' My dear and indomitable lord it is you, and for love of you that I will never have any other Knight by my side.' The Prince, greatly amazed by the love of the Countess, replied, ' My Lady, I also vow to God that as long as you live never will I have any other woman save you to my wife.' "

So delighted was the Prince that thereon he made a secret contract of marriage with her, and refused to listen to any other counsel. The choice, however, was unfortunate, for the Princess Joan was every bit as extravagant in her ideas as her husband. Her love of dress was notorious in an age of extreme luxury and show. She affected the most costly robes of iridescent shot silk. Her wardrobe was overcrowded with hundreds of dresses ; but be they for ordinary wear or for State occasions they were all of them of the costliest fabrics. She it was who introduced the custom of

embroidering her bodices with ermine. Wonderfully jewelled belts, costly furs, silks from Lyons, Aleppo, and Alexandria, scarce satisfied her longing for show. Her lofty coifs were radiant with pearls and her person glittered with jewels. The Chandos Herald, indeed, calls her a "lady lovely agreeable and wise," but while she, no doubt, fully deserved the first two encomiums, she had little claim to the last, save in the respect of knowing how to get what she wanted. Be this as it may, the marriage was celebrated with great pomp on October 11th, at Westminster, in the presence of the whole of the Royal Family.

Early in 1362 the newly married couple entertained the King and Queen right royally at Berkhamstead, but it soon became evident that no great cordiality could exist between the two Courts. The King also recognised that the Prince ought to have a greater scope for exercising his energies than was possible in England. During the Berkhamstead visit he proposed to send him over as Governor to Aquitaine, and as early as March we find letters sent thither to withhold decisions on certain subjects until the arrival of the Prince of Wales. In June writs were issued to empower ships to be retained for his passage. On July 19th the King, with all due pomp, invested him as Lord of Gascony and Guienne, subject to himself as seigneur; and the Prince did homage for his new principality and promised to pay an ounce of gold yearly at Westminster as acknowledgment of the overlordship of the King. But the Prince was in no great

haste to arrive in his new dominions. Business and pleasure retained him in England. There was doubtless much to see to ; among other things, on September 1st, the Prince handed over to the Priory of Christchurch, at Canterbury, his manors of Ffaukeshall (Vauxhall), near London, extending to thirty-one acres and one rod in Lambeth, also four hillocks and dales near the river Thames called Smythhill, Russhill, Luttelhill, and Halfhill, at Walsend. This grant was made to pay for the building of the Chapel of Our Lady Undercroft, in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. It was all very well to make grants to churches, but the Prince might have made more profitable use of his possessions, for before he set out for France the King had once again to allow him to pledge his lands for four years to his creditors in the event of his death in Aquitaine, and this, too, although he was receiving annually sixty thousand gold crowns from each instalment of the King of France's ransom.

Christmas found the Prince and Princess still in England, and the King and Queen came to pay them a farewell visit at Berkhamstead. At last, in February 1363, all was ready and the Black Prince and his wife set out for Gascony. There were many who saw them depart with sorrow, for Froissart relates how an old knight told how he had seen in a certain book of prophecy, " that neither the Prince of Wales, eldest son of King Edward, nor the Lord Lionel of Ulster, nor the Lord Thomas of Woodstock, should ever come to the crown of England, nor none of King Edward's sons



ST. STEPHEN'S HALL AND WESTMINSTER ABBEY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

should ever come to the crown. But that the nation of England should within a while devolve to the House of Lancaster." Improbable though this tale might seem the future was to disclose events more incredible ; for the famous Black Prince was destined to return from Aquitaine ruined in health, in fortune, and in reputation.

CHAPTER XII

DUKE OF AQUITAINE

WITH his marriage and appointment to the lordship of Aquitaine and Guienne we enter on a new phase of the Prince's career. Hitherto circumstances had compelled him to play a purely spectacular part; it remained to be seen how far this unfortunate education was to militate against his chances of success as an administrator. There can be little doubt that extravagant generosity and a chivalrous inclination to assist all those in distress, irrespective of the cause of their calamities, much as they may appeal to the romantic, are not the most desirable traits in a man who is called on to reorganise provinces devastated by years of cruel racial warfare. Unfortunately, the Prince was unable to break with the past; he could not lay aside the *rôle* of the knight-errant and assume that of the impartial statesman.

Prince Edward and his retinue had a prosperous voyage, and reached La Rochelle on the fourth day, where the population received him with outward tokens of joy. No sooner had Sir John Chandos, the King's

Lieutenant in Aquitaine, heard of his successor's arrival, than he hurried from Niort to meet him and welcome him to his new government. Then they set out together to Poitiers, where the Prince received the fealty of many of his new subjects, and so on to Bordeaux, where he established his headquarters at the Abbey of St. Andrew.

Sir John Chandos had much to tell his lord and friend of the difficulties of his new position—difficulties in some measure due entirely to the Prince himself. The two great raids of 1355 and 1356 were still fresh in men's memories. When Sir John had arrived some eighteen months before in Aquitaine he had found out this to his cost. For so bitter was the racial hatred thus engendered, that in many cases individual towns and even provinces refused to accept the terms of the Treaty of Bretigny; they would listen to no arguments, and defied even the authority of the King of France. Well it was that King Edward had entrusted these difficult negotiations to Sir John, for no one else had the necessary tact and prestige to carry out the mission. Another very serious problem was the question of what was known as the Companies. These bands or regiments of mercenaries were the direct outcome of the years of incessant warfare. In many cases originally raised for temporary purposes by direct contract between the King and some adventurers, they had become, as it were, small standing armies, the property of their leaders, who were ready to sell their swords to any prince who bid sufficiently high for them. While their swords were

thus at the disposal of the highest bidder, inside the Company itself the sternest discipline was enforced ; and here lay the cause of their success, for while treachery to their employer was a commonplace occurrence, treachery to the Company was a thing almost unheard of, so strong was the *esprit de corps*, so stern the discipline. The Peace of Bretigny came as a cruel blow to the leaders of the Companies ; it deprived them and their men of their ordinary means of livelihood. Meanwhile they made what profit they could by annexing to themselves the particular district in which they happened to be stationed, and though with the end of the war the object of their existence ceased, they not unnaturally refused to act on this view of the situation. It needed therefore something stronger than mere persuasion to clear Aquitaine of these regiments of robbers, and it was a fortunate thing that Chandos, the intimate friend of Calverly, Knolles, and the other commanders of the Companies, was entrusted with the duty of removing them from the Principality. But though they were thus expelled from Aquitaine, they still hung on the borders, and their existence in France, preying as they did on the unfortunate subjects of the French King, was a standing menace to the cause of peace, and a problem which was never absent during the whole of the Prince's governorship of the country.

Another question which had to be solved was the exact boundaries of the Principality. Here the difficulty arose from the fact that many of the greater feudatories owned possessions, some in English Aquitaine, some

in the French borders, some in the Kingdom of Navarre.

Another problem was the unending task of settling disputes of jurisdiction between town and overlord, between corporation and citizen, between lord and subject. What added enormously to the difficulty was the fact that each province had its own particular customs. Bigorre differed from Limousin, Limousin differed from Angoumois, Angoumois differed from Poitou, and so on, in innumerable variations. Then the feudal customs of the Seneschalships and the Maréchaussées differed from the laws and customs of the towns, while the towns themselves fell into three distinct, well-recognised groups. Those whose charters were modelled on that of Bordeaux, where the corporation was almost an *imperium in imperio*, and the Prince's officers had no status; those which followed the model of Rouen, where the corporation had certain well-defined powers, and the Prince's officers had also their allotted jurisdiction; and lastly, the frontier fortresses, or bastides, where the corporation practically was a nonentity, and the Prince's officers had the sole voice in the ordering of affairs. Such, then, were some of the problems which the Prince was called on to solve. They may be more broadly grouped as the maintenance of peace abroad and strong government at home.

The Prince, on arriving at the seat of his government, had first of all to see that his authority was properly recognised by his new subjects.

Before leaving England he had done homage to his

father for his new principality. His first duty on reaching his capital, was to make arrangements about the homage due from his new subjects. Nearly the whole of 1363 was taken up in perambulating the Principality, and receiving the fealty due from the various lords and towns. One great ceremony was held at one o'clock on July 9th, in the Cathedral of St. Andrew, at Bordeaux. There, in the presence of the Prince, Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, John Chandos, Vicomte Saint Sauvier, William de Seris, Constable of Bordeaux, and Peter Maderan, royal notary, the great feudatories of the duchy, swore their allegiance. The ceremony commenced by William de Seris reading the royal letters of institution. "Now to take away all doubts and contentions which may arise hereafter about this matter, and to the end that the affair may be more clear, over and above, and again we reserve unto ourselves, and to our Majesty Royal, expressly and by tenor of these presents, the Direct Supremacy and all the Sovereignty and Resort of the whole Principality of Aquitaine and Gascony, and of all the Cities, Counties, Castles, Lands, Countries, Towns, Forts, Isles, Provinces and Places and of all Prelates, Counts, Vicomtes, Barons, Nobles, and other subjects and inhabitants of the said Provinces, which we have given to our said Eldest Son, and conveyed unto his power by the tenor of our letters hereabove incorporated. . . . And for evident token and clear demonstration that our said Son shall hold and ought to hold, under us and of our said Majesty and by Liege Homage, the which he has made unto us at

present, all the said things and every one of them : he shall be obliged to pay unto us every year at our Palace at Westminster on the Feast of Easter one ounce of Gold." By order of these letters homage had to be done twice over, first to the Prince as representing his father, the King of England, and then to the Prince as the new feudatory. So each vassal had to come up twice and kneel before the Prince and place his clasped hands in his and swear his oath of allegiance, and in return receive from him the kiss of peace on his lips.

The first to pay homage was Arnould Amanieu, Lord of Albret ; this great feudatory swore his allegiance, reserving his franchises and liberties according to the custom of his ancestors ; following him came seventeen barons, twenty knights, and eighteen squires. A week later another great ceremony took place at the cathedral in the presence of Chandos and Warwick, the royal commissioners, and James Audeley, John Stretely, and of John Harewell, when a hundred and eighty mayors, jurors, consuls or procurators of some forty towns of Aquitaine, came and paid their feudal homage.

The taking of homage, though no doubt important, was one of the Prince's easiest duties in his new Principality. His powers, though in certain cases limited by the royal supremacy, were on the whole ample. His duties included all measures for the defence of the provinces entrusted to his charge ; the supervision of all royal and ducal officials ; the administration of justice and the right of revision, subject to an appeal to the King at Westminster ; the power of issuing and coining

money ; the collection and retention of all feudal dues hitherto due either to the King or the Duke, with similar rights over all ecclesiastical or monastic dues ; the right of punishing all traitors, and rewarding all those who were loyal, and full authority over all cities, castles, towns, monasteries, corporations, privileges and franchises, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Bretigny.

To assist him in his government the Prince had four great officers—Thomas Felton as Seneschal, John Chandos as Constable, John Harewell as Chancellor, and Guiscard d'Angle as Marshal. The duties of the Seneschal were mainly administrative ; they included the protection of the county, the imposition and collection of taxes, and the supervision of high and low justice. The Constable was the chief officer of the home department under the Prince ; his duties were to supervise the collection of revenues for the good government of the realm, and to see that it was employed in the best way for the public interest. The duties of the Chancellor were to affix the seal to all writs issued by the High Court of Gascony, to accompany the Seneschal on his rounds, and to give decisions in all small non-contentious cases. The personal duties of the Prince thus resolved themselves into keeping a close watch over his great vassals, lay, clerical or bourgeois, and above all to see that his officials were punctilious in the discharge of their duties. As head of the court of appeal the Prince had a special means of making his personal qualities felt, but unfortunately, just on this point, he was handi-

capped by the fact that his decisions were liable to be overridden by his father ; for the ultimate court of appeal lay at Westminster. The system naturally worked badly ; it entailed great expense, caused long delays, and consequently weakened the authority of the Prince.

On May 28, 1365, the King set up a new system of appeal, hoping thereby to assure to all litigants speedy justice. He conferred on the Prince the right of summoning to his tribunal all cases of appeal. When necessary he was empowered to choose a special panel of judges in any part of Aquitaine ; these judges were to be men well instructed in the law, with knowledge of local traditions and customs, and empowered to give their decisions according to the particular customs of each province. But if any one thought that he was deprived of his rights by one of the Prince's judges, he might still appeal to Westminster. If the appeal failed the Prince was empowered to see the decision of his court enforced. If the appeal was upheld the King himself would see to it that the case was speedily brought before the supreme tribunal.

The new system worked little better than the old. There still remained the cross jurisdictions and the protracted appeals. One or two examples from Monsieur Moisant's book (" *Le Prince noir en Aquitaine* ") will best show the difficulties which the Prince had to encounter. Joubert, Lord of Malemort and Bryne, died in 1364, leaving two daughters, Blanche and Galienne. Blanche was to be a nun, therefore the estate was left to Galienne. But the bastard, Bertrand d'Albret, knew nothing of this,

and thought Blanche was an heiress ; so getting together some other cut-throats he took the castle of Rossile by escalade and carried off Blanche to make her his wife. In spite of the family of Malemort he installed himself in the domains of Joubert. The Lady Galienne for two years spent all her substance in the Prince's court, but could "get neither right or reason," for d'Albret overawed the judges and tried every trick of chicanery to prolong the suit. In vain the Black Prince strove to hurry on the case ; adjournment followed adjournment. It was only by a direct order from the King himself that the Prince was able to force his courts to exert their powers and "to give good and prompt justice."

The following case will show how litigants often refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Prince's courts. Louis de Mauval seized the castle of Juliac, the property of Etienne de Montroux and Marguerite de Mense, his wife. Rich, influential and popular, he refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Seneschal. The plaintiffs appealed to the Prince, who summoned the case to his own tribunal. On the day of the trial de Mauval pleaded that the Prince had exceeded his authority and that the case ought to be tried in the court of the Seneschal of Limousin. The judges refused to listen to this plea. Thereon de Mauval appealed to the King at Westminster. Etienne and Marguerite lodged a counter appeal. The King appointed special arbiters. Then de Mauval claimed that he had retained Jean Rivally whom the court appointed advocate for Etienne. The court upheld its own decision, and

thereon once again de Mauval appealed to Westminster. It was quite clear that de Mauval was only advancing fallacious appeals to drag on the suit, and at last the King ordered the senior judge of Angoulême to give satisfaction to Etienne.

It was not, however, till 1370 that King Edward recognised his mistake and set up a supreme court of appeal for Aquitaine at Saintes, "because this town contains a great number of expert lawyers and because the surrounding districts provide plenty of food." But by then the mischief was done. The people of Aquitaine, exposed to all the vexations of the law, and seeing the unscrupulous flourishing, had lost all sense of trust in English justice. No doubt the primary cause of these judicial blunders lay in the fact that the King had reserved to himself the ultimate court of appeal. But the Black Prince cannot be entirely exonerated. If he had really had the interests of his people at heart, if he had thrown himself as strenuously into the affairs of government as he did into the business of war or the satisfaction of pleasure, the hands of his judges and administrators would have been enormously strengthened, and he might have persuaded his father to set up a proper tribunal in Aquitaine.

King Edward had granted his son an ample revenue for the government of his Principality: all feudal dues, the coinage of money, the proceeds of justice, royalties on mines and forests, customs, tolls and certain dues were granted to him for the expenses of his Government and the maintenance of his Court. An examination of

the Prince's accounts shows that even during the early years of his rule there was always a deficit in his budget, and that this deficit was due not to the expenses of the Government, but to the extravagance of the Court. His biographer and admirer, the Chandos Herald, throws clear light on this. "I may truly say that since the birth of Christ, never was such good entertainment nor more honourable than then : for every day at his table he had more than eighty knights, and four times as many esquires. Then made they jousts and revels at Angoulême and at Bordeaux. Then was found all joy, merriment, bounty, freedom and honour."

During the early years of his government men had not felt the burden of his extravagance and the want of security arising from this manner of government. Everybody he came in contact with was charmed with his courtesy, his skill at arms, and his affability. "All his lieges and his people loved him passionately for he did them much good. Those who were about his person valued and loved him much, for liberality was his staff and nobleness his director, judgement (had he), temperance and uprightness, reason, equity and moderation." Such was his character in the eyes of his servants. But unfortunately, charming as he was in person, gracious in manner, kind in heart, pious according to his lights and anxious to please, at the bottom there was lacking in his character the necessary sternness to say no. He was, in fact, too anxious to please his immediate companions ; too little able to understand the point of view of those with whom he did not come

in contact ; too liable to be swayed by sentiment and emotion to make a good judge or a strict administrator. Thus it was, as Froissart tells us, that "The Prince provided for the Knights of his own county and his household, particularly those whom he loved most, with the noble and handsome offices which were at his disposal in the duchy. He nominated to all his stewartries and bailiwicks Knights from England, who kept up greater state and magnificence than the inhabitants of the country could have wished."

The splendour of the Prince and the stories about his Court made him for the time being the wonder of Christendom. The King of Cyprus, who had come to Western Europe to raise funds for a crusade against the infidels, after visiting the Courts of Burgundy, Flanders, France, and England said "that but as yet he had done little until he should have seen the Prince of Wales." Accordingly, early in 1364, he proceeded to Aquitaine, at the moment that the Prince was celebrating the birth of his eldest son Edward by magnificent jousts at Angoulême. There he was entertained most royally for a month, and then sent on a tour round the duchy under the care of Sir John Chandos, returning in time to take part in another magnificent passage of arms. But in spite of many courteous assurances, he could get no recruits. The Prince indeed told him "that this was an expedition in which any man of honour and worth was interested, and that if it pleased God and the passage was open, he would not be alone, but would be followed by all who were desirous to advance themselves."

No doubt such an expedition would have appealed to the Prince beyond measure, but there were reasons which absolutely forbade him for the moment. On January 4, 1364, King John had returned to England as a voluntary prisoner, since he could not raise the money he had promised for his ransom, and scarcely had he been installed in his old quarters at the Savoy Palace when he sickened and fell ill, and on April 8th—a few days after the departure of the King of Cyprus for Angoulême—he died. Matters were further complicated because, on the death of Philip of Rouvres, John had treated the Dukedom of Burgundy as a lapsed fief and had granted it to his young son Philip le Hardi. But Charles the Bad of Navarre, whose claim to the crown of France, if the Salic Law really existed, was a better one than that of Edward of England, asserted that Burgundy ought to come to him. John had treated this claim with contumely; but Charles waited his time, and no sooner was John dead than he set about to create disturbances in the south, while at the same time he persuaded the Captal de Buch to join hands with his German feudatories and the leaders of the Companies who had not yet been expelled from Normandy.

Luckily for France Charles V., the new King, had found a leader able to cope with any general of the day. This warrior, Bertrand du Guesclin, the son of a knight of Brittany, had distinguished himself in the guerilla warfare at home, and now first attained fame by defeating the Navarrese forces under the Captal at Cocherel



THE CROWNING OF CHARLES V AT RHEIMS

on May 16, 1364. Meanwhile in Brittany Charles of Blois was still maintaining the struggle against de Montfort, though, in 1362, de Montfort had been acknowledged Duke. The new King of France would willingly have sent him aid, but this would have entailed the rupture of the Treaty of Bretigny, and he was not yet ready to enter on the final struggle with the English. Accordingly, with his secret approbation, du Guesclin left his service and entered that of Charles of Blois. No sooner had de Montfort heard of this than he sent to Aquitaine to his old friend Sir John Chandos, entreating him to come to his aid with a following of English knights, adding "that he expected Brittany would afford such a field of honour that all knights and squires who were desirous of advancing their name ought most cheerfully to come thither."

Sir John at once went to the Prince and asked him what he should do. The Prince would have liked above all things to have gone himself, but he could not enter on such an expedition without imperilling the peace, or without his father's leave. But he gladly gave Sir John leave to go, the more so because the Lord d'Albret, the Lord Aymon de Pommiers, the Souldich de la Trane and several other knights of Aquitaine had, early in the year, hurried north, and offered their swords to the King of France and fought under du Guesclin at Cocherel. Sir John at once set about making preparations, but in spite of his offer no knight of Aquitaine would join his standard, and he was forced to be content with two hundred lances recruited from the

English. This attitude of the baronage of Aquitaine ought to have put the Prince on his guard ; but the success of Sir John at Auray on September 29th lulled him to sleep again, and instead of setting himself to win the confidence of his people by careful administration and good justice, he gave himself over as usual to the pleasures of the moment.

The death of Charles of Blois at the battle of Auray seemed finally to settle the problem of Brittany. De Montfort was recognised as Duke by the King of France and Jean de Penthièvre was compensated by states in the south. Thus one outstanding quarrel between France and England was happily settled. Meanwhile the character of the French King seemed to make for peace. Charles infinitely preferred the study to the camp : he loved to spend his leisure hours in the company of Thomas of Pisa, the great Italian astrologer, or in the collection of manuscripts. His Court was so well ordered that none of his courtiers dare dishonour a woman, use a foul word, or tell an obscene tale. But under the garb of a simple scholar Charles hid the talents of a careful administrator and trained diplomatist. To the Black Prince he seemed a being beneath contempt, devoid of all knightly virtues. But King Edward understood him better and said of him, "There never was a King who had less to do with arms, yet never was there a King who gave men so much to do." The French King had set his heart on winning back Aquitaine, but he knew how to bide his time, and he had a trump card ready to play. For

King Edward had never exchanged the final ratifications of the Treaty of Bretigny. Accordingly, when the moment arrived, Charles was ready to deny the Treaty and summon the men of Aquitaine back to their allegiance. That they would gladly return he had no doubt, for he remembered how bitter had been the complaints of many; how, for instance, the men of Cahors had declared, "how odious it is to lose our natural lord, and to pass over to a master we know not," and had added, "it is not us who abandon the King of France. It is he who against our wishes hands us over like orphans to the hands of a stranger." So, in accordance with his policy, Charles seized every opportunity to place his adversaries in the wrong, and at the same time to win over their adherents. With this in view he attempted to detach the Captal de Buch from his allegiance to the Prince. The Captal had been captured by du Guesclin at the battle of Cocherel, and while a prisoner on parole had been greatly instrumental in arranging the peaceful settlement between Navarre and France. As reward for this service the French King paid up his arrears of ransom and granted him the Castle of Damemaix in Brie with three thousand francs per annum, for which the Captal willingly did him homage. But on his return to Aquitaine the new subject of the King of France found himself in disgrace, for the Prince of Wales saw through the wiles of King Charles, and taxed the Captal with attempting to serve two masters. Thereon de Buch, whose loyalty to the Prince was above suspicion, at once sent an esquire to

France to renounce all claims to the Castle of Damemaix and to the annuity.

Charles next attempted to make capital out of the fact that the Free Companies, who were still ravaging France, were mainly composed of Englishmen. "These Companies having been brought up to arms, and taught to live on pillage and plunder alone, neither could nor would abstain from it. Their great resource was France; and these Companies called the Kingdom of France their domain. They dare not, however, make any attempt on Aquitaine, for the county would not have suffered it; besides, to say the truth the greater number of their captains were Gascons or English, of persons attached to the King of England or Prince of Wales." The King of France accordingly wrote, in 1365, both to King Edward and to the Prince pointing out that by the Treaty of Bretigny they were bound to lend their aid in expelling the marauders. Edward at once wrote and ordered the Companies to leave France. Some few obeyed, but others replied that "as they held nothing there of the King of England, so neither for him would they leave their garrisons, and that livelihood that they had got with so much labour." Thereon the King began to make preparations to aid the French by arms; but Charles, hearing of the military preparations, begged him to stay at home, so Edward in wrath swore never again to try to help King Charles. In spite of this Charles still attributed the presence of the Companies to bad faith on the part of Edward and the Black Prince, especially as some of the freebooters, who

attempted to enter Aquitaine, were driven back into France by the Prince. Meanwhile the Pope attempted to divert the Companies by sending them to the assistance of the King of Hungary who was fighting the Turks. But this plan was frustrated by events which were happening in Spain, and which were to cause the Prince to enter on the expedition, which, in spite of its military success, was to ruin his career and cause the loss of Aquitaine to England.

CHAPTER XIII

CAUSES OF THE SPANISH CAMPAIGN

LITTLE did the Pope, Urban V., think, on June 9, 1365, when he hurled his bull of excommunication at the head of Pedro I., surnamed the Cruel, King of Castile, that he had lighted the match which was to set in blaze a conflagration, which would destroy the hated supremacy of the English in his beloved France. The son of Alfonso the Conqueror, Pedro, had been left a hard task. His father had, from motives of policy, married Maria of Portugal, but no sooner had she presented him with an heir than he returned to his mistress the beautiful Leonor de Guzman. By her he had nine sons and one daughter, on whom he lavished all his care and affection to the disparagement of his lawful son. When Pedro came to the throne he showed surprising magnanimity, but his bastard half-brothers treated him with treachery. Thereon the King revealed his true colours, and struck at them with a heavy hand. Kinsman, noble, churchman and burgher, none were spared who withstood the royal commands. For fifteen years did Pedro struggle to reduce his insubor-

dinate people to order, and the success he gained over noble and ecclesiastic alike shows that on the whole his rule was beneficial to the people at large. Unfortunately for him his difficulties were not confined to governing his own people. With the object of strengthening his country, he had fought for and wrested from Aragon certain march lands near the Ebro. He had also bitterly offended the King of France, for the day after his wedding with Blanche of Bourbon he had returned, like his father, to his former mistress Maria de Padilla. As for the unfortunate Blanche he kept her a captive, and when she shortly died Frenchmen swore he had caused her to be murdered.

Such was the situation in Castile when, in 1365, Henry of Transtamare, the bastard half-brother of Pedro, fled to France, and gained the Pope's ear. Don Pedro contemptuously refused to listen to the Papal summons, which bade him appear at Avignon to answer the charges of murder laid at his door. Thereon Urban V. declared him excommunicate and granted his kingdom to his half-brother. The ecclesiastical feeling against Pedro was strong. Not only was he supposed by common report to have murdered Leonor de Guzman and his wife Blanche, of Bourbon, but "there was also a report current among the people that Don Pedro had even formed an alliance with the Kings of Benamarine, Granada and Tremeson, who were enemies of God and infidels. Many were the wrongs he might do to his country: and (they feared) lest he should violate the churches: for he had seized their revenues

and detained the priests of holy church in Prison, where he vexed them with all sorts of tyranny."

But it was not only the misconduct of Don Pedro which caused the Pope to move in the matter. Both Urban and Charles of France saw an opportunity of ridding their country from the ravages of the Companies. Accordingly, they contrived between them to raise the money required to ransom du Guesclin, who had been captured by Sir John Chandos at Auray, and they sent him to Henry of Transtamare as leader of his forces. The Companies soon flocked to his standard, and du Guesclin halted his command at Villeneuve near Avignon, to receive the Pope's blessing on his enterprise. From the windows of his palace Urban saw the foraging parties scouring the countryside. "Ah," he said, "how these rascals give themselves the trouble to go to hell." But bless them he must, as the only way to be rid of them. So, under the auspices of Christ's Vicar on earth, the Companies swept out of France leaving a trail of desolation in their wake. Save Hawkwood, nearly every noted free-lance in Europe had answered to du Guesclin's summons.

In addition to leaders of the Companies like Sir Hugh Calverly, Sir Walter Hewett, and Sir Matthew Gournay, personal friends of the Prince like Sir Eustace d'Abrichecourt were found in this army of adventurers. The Prince himself, anxious to be rid of the constant cause of bickering between himself and his cousin of France, had done all in his power to expedite the adventure, failing to see the political importance of

the undertaking. Every effort had been made to get Sir John Chandos to join the expedition; but that careful diplomatist refused to go, for he looked further than all, save, perhaps, the King of France. He perceived the danger to Aquitaine in the possible erection of a Kingdom of Castile wholly given up to the cause of France; and very soon the wisdom of his decision was confirmed. King Edward, as soon as he heard of the adventure, at once wrote to Calverly and others to forbid them to join, but these letters never reached them. Meanwhile du Guesclin and Henry of Transtamare paid especial attention to the English knights, especially to Sir Eustace d'Abrichecourt and Sir John Calverly.

Du Guesclin's army was welcomed by the King of Aragon. He saw his opportunity of regaining the lost march lands, and he counselled his subjects to put up with the high-handed plundering of the Companies. On New Year's Day, 1366, du Guesclin and his commanders were sumptuously entertained by the King, and at this meeting a letter was concocted and sent to Don Pedro, demanding that he should throw open the passes into Castile to the army, under the pretence that the expedition was a crusade against the infidel King of Granada. Meanwhile the host of would-be pilgrims marched on Saragossa. From Saragossa there was but one road that an army such as du Guesclin's could take; the road up the Ebro in the direction of Logrono, and from thence the main Burgos Valladolid road. The necessity of plunder barred the use of the difficult road across the

barren uplands. Accordingly Don Pedro hurled defiance at the adventurers and began to collect his army at Burgos. The campaign, however, ended without any real fighting, for Don Pedro, finding but little response to his summons to arms, lost nerve and fled the country, leaving his vacant throne to the usurper, who was proclaimed King as Henry II. In April, in his despair in Galicia, Don Pedro sent envoys to the Black Prince appealing to the treaty of alliance concluded between them in March, 1363, and also to his pity. In this he was advised by his one remaining friend, Don Fernando de Castro, who said to him, "Sir, give heed to me. By that faith I owe you, at once if you believe me, send straightway to the Prince of Aquitaine. A man right chivalrous and hardy is he, and so strong in men-at-arms, that there is no living man save God alone who can wrong him. And if you find him ready to help you, be certain that ye will again have Spain in your hands before the year is over."

When the King's letter arrived the Prince retired with it into his private apartment, and at once sent for Sir John Chandos and Sir Thomas Felton, his Constable and Seneschal. When they arrived he said to them with a smile, "'My Lords here is great news from Spain. The King Don Pedro, our cousin, complains grievously of Henry, his bastard brother, who has seized his kingdom and driven him out of it, as perhaps you have heard related by those who have come hither. He entreats of us assistance, as his letter will more fully explain to you." The



INTERIOR OF A FRENCH CHÂTEAU IN THE XIV CENTURY

Prince then again read it over, word for word, to the knights, who bent a willing ear. When he had finished he said, 'You Sir John, and you Sir Thomas, who are my principal counsellors, and in whom I have the greatest confidence and trust, tell me I beg of you, what will be the most advisable for us to do in this business.' The two knights looked at each other, but uttered not a word. The Prince again appealed to them and said, 'Speak boldly whatever be your opinions.'" The Constable and the Seneschal felt the gravity of the situation. They knew how the Prince's soul longed after a life of adventure, they knew how irksome to him had been the years of administration in Aquitaine, but they knew far better than the Prince himself the dangers which already loomed on the horizon. Sir John called to mind the scenes he had witnessed at the time of the transfer of the province; the heartfelt misery at parting from France; the hatred of submission to the English; Sir Thomas and he knew full well that the frontier districts and fortresses were still much more French than English; that commercial disputes and jealousies had weakened the English party even in Bordeaux and the wine-growing districts; that dissatisfaction at the want of method in the administration, irritation at the overbearing ways of the conquerors, suspicion of the justice to be obtained in the law courts had gone far to dull the temporary enthusiasm which had been aroused by the genial personality of the Prince himself. There was no disguising the fact

that the revenues already fell short of the requirements; that the fidelity of the greater feudatories was far from beyond suspicion; that retrenchment and reorganisation were the crying needs of the day. It was their duty, therefore, to protest against anything which would entail a heavy burden on the exchequer. Still, they could understand the feelings of the Prince—his desire for action, his sympathy with a sovereign in distress. Instead of hardening their hearts they compromised, and suggested that an escort should be provided to bring Don Pedro to Bordeaux, where he might state his case himself. The Prince accepted their advice, hoping that, by the arrival of Don Pedro, he would have been able to overpersuade his trusty counsellors. But before the escort could be got ready Don Pedro himself arrived in hot haste at Bayonne, and Sir Thomas Felton brought him thence to Bordeaux.

Meanwhile, the Prince had summoned his full council and laid the matter before them; but here again he found strong opposition to his desires. Sir John, as spokesman, said to him, "My lord, you have heard the old proverb 'All cost, all lost,'" and proceeded to tell him in clear terms what the council thought of Don Pedro, of the ill deeds he was credited with, of the sacrilege he had committed, and of the cruel crimes and murder he had instigated. Could a true knight undertake war on behalf of such a man? But the Prince was set on war, his soul craved after adventure, and he cried out to his old

friend, "Chandos, Chandos, I've seen the time when you would have given me the other advice whether the cause was right or wrong." Again and again the Prince called his council, but they sternly set their faces against the Spanish war. But no amount of advice could turn him from his desire; day by day he became more set on the adventure, and at last he determined, in spite of his council, to assist Don Pedro, and he thus published his intention:—

"My lords, I take it for granted and believe that you give me the best advice you are able. I must however inform you, that I am perfectly acquainted with the life and conduct of Don Pedro, and well know that he has committed faults without number, for which at present he suffers; but I will tell you the reasons which at this moment urge and embolden me to give him assistance. I do not think it either decent or proper that a bastard should possess a kingdom as an inheritance, nor drive out of his realm his own brother, heir to the country by lawful marriage; and no King or King's son ought ever to suffer it, as being of the greatest prejudice to royalty. Add to this, that my father and this Don Pedro have for a long time been allies, much connected together, by which we are bound to aid and assist him, in case he should require it." From the point of view of obtaining what he desired, the Prince's declaration had an excellent effect. It at once lifted the whole question from the mere personal desire of military adventure to the region of higher politics.

Little did the Prince imagine that his own son Richard would be driven from his throne by a usurper, and that in England the voice of the people was to be a better title to the throne than hereditary descent. But he remembered the fall of his grandfather, and his declaration recalled to his English subjects the years of degradation under Mortimer, and to his Gascon subjects the condition of France, owing to the disputed succession to the crown.

Writs were at once issued to summon a Parliament of notables at Bordeaux, and the baronage and greater burghers of Saintoigne, Poitou, Quercy, Limousin, Gascony, and Aquitaine met in solemn conclave. After three days of discussion the Prince's influence gained the upper hand, and it was determined that an embassy should be sent to England to inquire what the King's opinion was. In England the royal council gave no uncertain answer. The decision was practically unanimous that the Black Prince—the eldest son of the King of England, as he proudly called himself—should be commissioned to restore Don Pedro to his own, and thus support the principle of legitimacy and counteract the growing ascendancy of France in the Iberian peninsula.

The Black Prince was delighted when he heard his father's decision, and that his favourite brother, John of Lancaster, was coming out to help him with powerful reinforcements. At last the old-time prophecy of the wizard Merlin was to be fulfilled, "That the leopards and their company should spread themselves to Spain."

But though the Prince was full of delight at the prospects of war, there were many who still doubted the expediency of the expedition. Chandos and Felton were full of mistrust, and the Princess Joan was on their side. In spite of her love of jewellery, she had refused to be dazzled by the wonderful gold and jewelled imitation of the Round Table which Don Pedro had presented to her husband on his first arrival. The adventure seemed full of ill omen, and she said to the Prince, "I fear lest ill come of it. The present is beautiful, but it will cost us dear."

The Parliament summoned to meet at Bayonne in September at once set about making preparations for the coming campaign. As Froissart said, "The English and Gascons are by their nature greedy;" so the first question that arose was finance. The baronage of Aquitaine were keen enough to fight, but had no intention of paying for the war out of their own pockets. Accordingly, as soon as the King's despatch was read, they made answer, "Sir, we will heartily obey the commands of the King our sovereign lord. It is but just that we should be obedient both to him and to you: this we will do and will attend Don Pedro upon this expedition; but we wish to know from whom we are to have our pay, for it is not customary for men-at-arms to leave their habitations to carry on war in a foreign country without receiving wages." The Prince then turned to Pedro and said, "Sir King, you hear what our people say; it is for you to give them an answer; for it behoves you to do so who are about to lead them

into action." Don Pedro replied, "My dear cousin, as long as my gold, my silver, and my treasures last, which I have brought from Spain, but which is not so great by twenty times as what I have left behind, I am willing it should be divided among your people." Thereon the Prince answered, "My lord, you speak well ; and for the surplus of the debt, I will take that upon myself towards them, and will order whatever sums you may want to be advanced you as a loan, until we shall be arrived in Castile." "By my head," quoth Don Pedro, "you will do me a great kindness."

The most important point was to win over to the cause of Don Pedro Charles the Bad, King of Navarre ; for the passes of the Western Pyrenees, by which alone Spain could be invaded from Aquitaine, all lay in his hands. Accordingly the Prince despatched Sir Thomas Felton and Sir John Chandos to Pampeluna to try and gain the alliance of Bearn. The choice was excellent, for Chandos was not only the best diplomatist of the day, but as lord of Saint Sauvier, in the Cotentin, he had had many dealings with Charles, who, as Count of Evreux, held possessions scattered all over Normandy. The task was no easy one, for the King was a notorious double-dealer, and had already pledged himself to Henry of Transtamare. However, Chandos knew his man, and the offer of a large bribe brought him to an amiable frame of mind, and on September 23rd a treaty was signed at Libourne by which, in return for two hundred thousand florins, Charles promised to open the passes and to provide a contingent for the invading army at

a sum of thirty-six thousand florins per month. Don Pedro's resources were unable to meet these demands, so the Prince undertook to advance him the money. The liabilities he thus incurred, along with what he had promised at the Parliament at Bayonne, were enormous, as the pay for the mercenary army amounted to five hundred and fifty thousand florins for six months. Don Pedro, on his side, bound himself, under the most solemn oath and pain of interdict and excommunication, to repay these huge sums, and left his daughters at Bordeaux as hostages. He promised to the Prince as tokens of gratitude the provinces of Biscay and Castro Urdiales in full sovereignty. In addition, he swore that all English subjects should be quit of payment of taxes and customs, saving the ordinary octroi dues. To mark his gratitude to the King of England, he decreed that he and his heirs should always have the right of leading the armies of Castile, and that, in their absence, the standard of England should be borne along with that of Castile.

Thereafter, throughout Aquitaine, there was the hurry of preparation. John of Gaunt, who had come over with the King's messengers, hastened home to raise his contingent. Heralds were despatched to Spain to summon back the English captains. Sir Eustace d'Abrichecourt, Sir Hugh Calverly, Sir Walter Hewett, Sir Matthew Gournay, and Sir John Devreux bade adieux to Henry of Transtamare and hurried home at the Prince's bidding. Meanwhile Sir John Chandos was despatched to engage the foreign leaders of the

Companies. The news of the proposed expedition thus reached the ears of the usurper, who sent for Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, and said to him, "Sir Bertrand, think of the Prince of Wales: they say he intends to make war upon us, to replace by force this Jew, who calls himself King of Spain, upon our throne. What do you say to this?" To which Sir Bertrand replied, "He is so valiant and determined a knight that, since he has undertaken it, he will exert himself to the utmost to accomplish it. I would therefore advise you to guard well all the passes and defiles on every side, so that no one may enter or go out of your kingdom without your leave. In the meantime keep up the affections of your subjects. I know of a truth that you will have great assistance from many knights in France, who will be happy to serve you. I will, with your permission, return thither, where I am sure of finding several friends, and I will bring back as many as I possibly can." "By my faith," replied the King, "you say well; and I will in this business follow everything you shall order." So both sides strained every effort to engage the Free Companies.

Meanwhile there was much speculation in Castile, Aragon, and France as to the real intentions of the Prince. "Some said the Prince was making this expedition through pride and presumption; that he was jealous of the honour Sir Bertrand du Guesclin had obtained in conquering Castile in the name of King Henry and then making him King. Others said that both pity and justice moved him to assist Don Pedro in

recovering his inheritance, for it was highly unbecoming for a bastard to hold a kingdom or bear the name of King." On all sides knights were divided as to which party they should join.

Sir John Chandos found the Companies assembled in the Basques, and by dint of lavish promises bought the services of twelve thousand of them for Don Pedro. He had already arranged, by means of a handsome subsidy, for their passage through the lands of the Count of Foix, on the understanding that the Prince should pay double the amount of any damage they might do during their journey. Meanwhile, at the advice of Sir John, the Prince had had his plate melted down to provide money to pay the expenses of the expedition until they reached Castile; for Sir John clearly told him that he must not attempt to tax his subjects for this adventure. So rich was the Prince's household that the melted plate kept the army well paid for many months.

The Prince himself proceeded on a tour round his Principality to stir up the interest of his feudatories on behalf of Don Pedro. Everywhere he went he found them willing to serve, provided he found the money for their expenses. At Angoulême he was one day amusing himself in his apartment with many knights of Gascony, Poitou, and England, joking each other alternately upon the Spanish expedition, when he turned to the Lord d'Albret and said, "My Lord d'Albret, how many men can you bring into the field for this expedition?" The Lord d'Albret was quick in

his answer, replying, "My Lord, if I wished to ask all my friends—that is, all my vassals—I can bring full a thousand lances and leave a sufficiency behind to guard my country." "By my head, Lord d'Albret, that is handsome," returned the Prince; then looking at Sir Thomas Felton and other English knights, he added, in English, "On my faith, we ought to love that country well where there is a baron who can attend his lord with a thousand lances." Then, again addressing himself to Lord d'Albret, he said, "Lord d'Albret, with great willingness I retain them all." "Let it be so, then, in God's name, my Lord," answered d'Albret. Thus day by day the Prince's force swelled in numbers, as detachment after detachment marched into the camp at Dax.

To save his pocket the Prince would have gladly started on the campaign in the last days of autumn; but Lancaster had not yet arrived with support from England, and, in spite of treaties and bribes, it was not yet certain on which side the Count of Foix and the King of Navarre would ultimately join their standards. Moreover, he had been advised to wait till after Christmas, as snow usually blocked the passes about then. "The Prince listened to this counsel the more willingly because his lady, the Princess, being far gone with child, was melancholy and sorrowful at the thought of his absence. He was desirous to wait until she should be brought to bed, as she wished to detain him." Meanwhile the Companies plundered friend and foe alike. To add to the heavy calls on his purse, Don Jayme, the

titular King of Majorca, arrived at Bordeaux, asking his aid against the King of Aragon, who had annexed his country and put his father to death. The Prince received this second royal exile in the most handsome manner, provided for his wants and those of his household, and said to him, "Sir King, I promise you most loyally that upon our return from Spain we will undertake to replace you on your throne of Majorca either by treaty or force of arms."

With expenses thus increasing on every side, the Prince began to consider how he could economise. So he wrote to the Lord d'Albret that he would only retain two hundred out of the thousand lances promised by him. D'Albret, in rage, replied that he had already engaged his men, and that he could not break faith with them, adding that he was extremely displeased with the way in which he had been treated, and hinting that he refused to do what he was told. The Prince laid d'Albret's letter before the council, and he spoke in English to his knights. "This Lord d'Albret is too great a man for my country when he thus wishes to disobey the orders of my council; but, by God, it shall not be as he thinks to have it. Let him stay behind if he will, for we will perform this expedition, if it please God, without his thousand lances." One of his English councillors answered, "My Lord, you are but little acquainted with the thoughts of these Gascons, nor how vainglorious they are; they have but little love for us, nor have they had much for some time past." The whole matter was extremely unfortunate; it arose out

of the Prince's unbusinesslike habits. He knew this himself quite well, but this knowledge only inflamed his Plantagenet blood and made him more bitter. For the time Lord d'Albret was in some danger. "For the Prince was of a high and overbearing spirit and cruel in his hatred ; he would, right or wrong, that every lord who was under his command should be dependant on him." However, wiser counsels prevailed. Sir John Chandos and Sir Thomas Felton succeeded in appeasing the Prince. The Count of Armagnac, uncle of d'Albret, came to Bordeaux to offer his apologies. But nothing would induce the Prince to alter his decision, and orders were once again sent to d'Albret to attend the army with only two hundred lances, "which was equally disagreeable to him and to his vassals : they never afterwards were so affectionate to the Prince as they had formerly been. They were forced, nevertheless, to bear this disappointment as well as they could for they had no remedy for it."

In the midst of these difficulties on the Feast of Epiphany in the year 1367, to the great delight of the Prince, the Princess gave birth to a fine boy. The christening took place two days later in the cathedral church of St. Andrew at Bordeaux, and the Bishop of Agen and the King of Majorca stood sponsors for the future Richard II. of England. Two days later, being a Sunday, the Prince marched out of Bordeaux at eight in the morning with all the men-at-arms who had been quartered there, and arrived that evening at Dax, where the Companies and the rest of the force had been

assembled. There he halted three days to await the arrival of Lancaster, who had landed in the Cotentin, and was making a forced march to pick him up. As soon as his favourite brother arrived he made preparations to open the campaign. The slippery Count of Foix arrived at the camp, and was received with marked attention and sent home well pleased. Meanwhile the burning question was whether the King of Navarre would perform his promise and open the passes, for it was well known that, in spite of the Treaty of Libourne, Charles the Bad had early in January, 1367, sworn to King Henry that he would not grant a passage to the expedition.

The difficulty, however, was solved by an unforeseen incident. While Charles was wondering which side was the stronger he had a rude awakening, for Sir Hugh Calverly, the last of the leaders of the Companies to quit Spain, heard of his double-dealing, and to show him the strength of the arm of the Prince his master, as he passed through Béarn sacked Miranda del Arga and Puente la Reina. Hence it was that one morning Don Martin Henriquez de la Cana, the trusted councillor of Charles, rode into the camp at Dax. At his proposal a meeting was arranged at St. Jean Pied de Port between the King, and Sir John Chandos and Lancaster on behalf of the Prince. After many solemn oaths on both sides, the King consented to open the passes and to bring his promised contingent to the army.

Up to this moment numbers of the Gascon and

French knights had never believed that there would be a campaign, as they had thought that Navarre would not open the passes. Consequently there was great hurrying of preparations on both sides. The barons of Poitou, Gascony, and Brittany came flocking to the Prince's standard at Dax ; while du Guesclin and the French knights hurriedly quitted Provence and pushed westwards through Aragon to join King Henry.

From St. Jean Pied de Port the road into Spain runs through the celebrated Pass of Roncesvalles, the scene of the death of the Paladin Roland. It required no small amount of organisation to lead a mediæval army in midwinter through the terrible Pyrenees. Fortunately, however, the Prince's great forte was organisation, and he had with him Sir John Chandos and many of those who had helped to make his raids in France so successful. The vaward of the army was entrusted to the young Duke of Lancaster, and Sir John was sent to him as his chief of the staff. Early on the morning of Monday, February 15th, Sir John put the troops in motion. It was a fine force that left St. Jean Pied de Port that morning, ten thousand mounted men, with many of the noblest scions of England, burning to win their spurs, and many a hardened warrior of Aquitaine. The long march was made in the face of a cruel, biting wind and heavy gusts of hail. "But since the time when the righteous God suffered death upon the Cross for us," writes the Chandos Herald, "never was there passage so narrow. They had no assistance, nor could the father help the child. So intense was the cold the

snow and the hail, that all were dismayed ; but by the Grace of God they passed in time and together ; about ten thousand horse or more and the survivors quartered themselves in Navarre." On the following day the Prince's division crossed the pass. With him rode Don Pedro, the brothers Felton, d'Abrichecourt, Loryng, and many another trusty blade, in all twelve thousand men. On Wednesday came the rear-guard with the King of Majorca, the Captal de Buch, the injured Lord d'Albret, Sir Robert Knolles, and many a famous leader of the Companies, making another ten thousand horse. Thus, by Wednesday evening, the whole army had made the perilous crossing, and was ready to commence the war in real earnest. Thus the Prince had successfully transported in midwinter some thirty thousand men across the most difficult country in Europe.

The actual fighting strength of this Anglo-Gascon force was but little over twenty thousand men : ten thousand men-at-arms, ten thousand mounted archers, and an unarmed groom between each man-at-arms and archer.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BATTLE OF NAJERA

FOR a week the army lay round Pampeluna, batten-
ing on the county of Navarre. When the news of
this advance reached King Henry, his advisers coun-
selled him to send a herald to the Prince to demand
the reason of his coming, pointing out that he had
never injured him, and asking him by what road he
was going to advance, as he was quite ready to offer
battle. Meanwhile the knighthood and peasantry of
Castile joined the hired bands of mercenaries which the
usurper had collected a few miles east of Burgos; for
Henry was very popular with his subjects. In spite of
the laws of chivalry the Prince had no intention of
throwing away his strategic advantages, and for the
time being kept the herald in honourable captivity, as
he desired if possible to penetrate the passes and cross
the Ebro without opposition.

Of the two roads leading from Pampeluna to Burgos,
one passes through Guipiscoa and Avila over the
mountains close to Vittoria, whence the Ebro can be
crossed at Miranda; the other debouches south on

Logrono, passing over the bridge there, and runs straight on to Burgos. The Prince's main body took the northern route on Vittoria, but a small scouting party of some eight score lances and three hundred mounted archers under the two Feltons was sent by Logrono to find out the plans of the enemy.

The campaign began inauspiciously with the news of the capture of Charles the Bad by Oliver de Mauny, a French knight in the service of the King of Aragon. The Prince knew well that there was treachery, and that Charles had himself planned his own capture. This contretemps and the difficulty of getting provisions caused considerable delay. Accordingly, King Henry, closely watched by the Feltons, was able to break up his camp at San Domingo de la Calzada, cross the Ebro, and post himself at Anastro, before the Prince's main body could debouch from the mountains round Vittoria. There the Prince was rejoined by the Feltons, who were able to give him a detailed report of King Henry's strength and dispositions. "So help me Jesus Christ," quoth Prince Edward, "this bastard is very bold. Let us advance, sirs, to meet him and take our position before Vittoria." On the following day the Prince and the advance-guard reached Vittoria. Eager for the conflict, although his rear-guard was still some seven leagues off among the mountain passes, he drew up his array hoping to tempt the enemy. Meanwhile, with all due pomp, he knighted Don Pedro and over two hundred

English and Gascons squires. So the day wore on, and although the scouts on both sides were in touch there was no engagement, for du Guesclin had not yet reached King Henry's camp, and without him the usurper had no intention of offering battle. On the following day the great Breton leader arrived, and it was soon seen that the enemy could act. For that night Don Tello, Henry's brother, was sent with some six thousand mounted men to beat up the Prince's outposts. Don Tello made a wide circling movement, intending to surprise the vaward of the English camp. Fortunately he fell in with a convoy which Sir Hugh Calverly was bringing in. Sir Hugh escaped, and the shouts of the pursuers warned the sentinels. Still, the surprise was very nearly successful. Many an Englishman and Gascon was slain in his bed. The English leader, the young Duke of Lancaster, showed considerable presence of mind, rushing out half-dressed to the alarm post and there on the hill rallying the fugitives. But before the Spanish could attack the hill the Prince himself and Sir John Chandos arrived, and the matter was no longer in doubt. Still, so great was the confusion that Don Tello was able to draw off his horse with practically no casualties. As the Spaniards rode homewards they came on the Feltons scouting party some two leagues from the English camp. The Feltons had some two hundred lances and the same number of archers. When summoned to surrender they proudly

refused and fell back on the little hill of Arniz. All day long the small band withstood the Spanish attack, and more than a hundred times they hurled back the assailants. But at last the French Marshal d'Audenham dismounted a thousand knights, and under cover of darts and javelins carried the hill and forced the survivors to surrender. From that day, in memory of the gallant slain, the hill was called Inglesmendi, or the Grave of the English, and as such it was pointed out some five centuries later when Wellington's army swept the French out of Vittoria.

Don Tello returned to camp with his prisoners, much to his brother's delight, who thanked him and said that soon all his enemies would come to this pass. But the French Marshal stepped forward, and told him that with the Prince of Wales was the flower of European chivalry, and stern would be the battle in which they were beaten; his advice was to hold their present position and not to advance into the plain; for by thus guarding the passes and defiles famine would do the business for them, and this famous army would be defeated without a blow. The advice was sound, and, in spite of boasting of his numbers, King Henry determined to accept it, and to content himself with harrying his foe; so the English soon felt the pinch of famine. "Little entertainment had they, for many there were, by St. Martin, who had neither bread nor wine. Nor very easy was their stay, for often were there attacks and skirmishings made by the genetors: and many of

the English of one division or another died. The weather was very nasty and dirty with much wind and rain. It was in March, doubt not, when often it rains, blows and snows: never was there a worse season."

From March 20th to March 26th the two armies lay opposite each other. At last the Prince saw that the Spaniards could not be tempted from their position, which was too strong to be attacked. Impetuous and daring as he was, full of lust for personal adventure, famous in the field of tactics, the Prince had also the true insight of the strategist. While day by day he drew up his force in battle array to tempt his adversary, he was secretly making preparations to surprise him. Silently, on the night of Monday the 26th, he broke up his camp at Vittoria and, leaving the main road, marched south, crossed the Sierra de Cantabria at La Guardia, and after a two days' forced march struck the Ebro at Viana. From Viana he moved by easy stages to Logrono, which had always remained loyal to Don Pedro. There he crossed the river by the bridge. Thus he had completely turned King Henry's line of passes, and was now actually threatening his communications with Burgos, while he had left the bleak uplands behind him, and was master of the fat valley of the Najerilla. From the 26th to the 30th of March, the Spaniards had completely lost touch of the English army. When their scouts told of the Prince's arrival at Logrono, King Henry hastened to withdraw across the Ebro at S. Vincente, and on April 1st reached Najera,

where he camped, six miles from the Prince who lay at Navarette.

From his camp that evening the Prince sent back to King Henry the long-detained herald, with the following letter: "Right puissant and right honoured Enrique, who art called Duke de Transtamare, and also calls himself for the time present in his letter King of Castile. We have well heard the contents of your noble letters present, that are both gracious and gentle, of which the tenor is for truth, that you would willingly know why we are in alliance and have pledged our faith with your enemy, whom we hold for our friend. Know that we ought to do this to uphold the old alliances which have been in times past and for love and for pity and to maintain the right: for you ought to understand in your heart that it is not right that a bastard should be King; nor should men agree to the disinheriting of a rightful heir, who is of lawful wedlock. Let me advise you on another point, since that you are so highly esteemed, and held to be so valiant; that you should on each side come to terms, to which I would willingly lend assistance; and would agree, for my part, that in Castile you should have a share. But reason and justice demand that you give up the crown. Thus might then be fostered a good peace between you. But as to my entering Spain, know that myself and my company, will, by the help of God, enter just in that place that it shall please us to enter, without asking leave."

The Prince had waited to despatch this letter until

such a time as he was in a position to make good the demands he put forward. But by now it was too late to think of a compromise ; for with du Guesclin and the French knights serving under the banner of Transtamare, it was not merely a question of the kingship of Castile, but another act in the long drama of the Hundred Years' War. Henry, with the might of France at his back, with du Guesclin to command his army, confident in his popularity with his subjects, trusting to numbers more than to science, and mistrusting any promise made by his half-brother, had no intention of resigning his throne without a struggle. Accordingly, after summoning his council, he decided to offer battle in front of the river Najerilla. Next morning he put his troops in movement and, crossing the stream, drew up in battle array some two leagues in front of Najera. The same morning the Prince also advanced a couple of leagues, feeling his way cautiously, covered by a cloud of scouts, for opposed to du Guesclin he was not going to act recklessly.

The scouts located King Henry's army on the heath among the orchards and fields near Najera. Both armies halted for the night about two leagues apart. King Henry put his trust in his cavalry, and was confident that the heavy mounted men-at-arms, supported by clouds of light horsemen or genetors, would be as successful against the Anglo-Gascon force as they had been against the Moors. Du Guesclin warned him of his error. "Sir," he had said, "remember the great army that the Prince brings. For

truth there is the flower of chivalry ; there is the flower of bachelry : these are the best men-at-arms in the world alive." The King replied, "Monsieur Bertrand, have no fear ! for I shall have, I am confident, more than four thousand horse who shall be on the side of the two wings of my division : and so shall you see, without fail four thousand genetors. And of men-at-arms better can no man find in Spain ; I shall have two thousand in my company."

The Castilian array was indeed imposing. Our knowledge of it comes from Don Pedro Lopez de Ayala, the Castilian chronicler, who that day carried the pennon of the Knights of the Scarf. The first line, commanded by du Guesclin, comprised fifteen hundred picked combatants from France and a fair body of Castilian men-at-arms, including the Knights of the Scarf under Don Sancho, brother of the usurper. In all it was probably about two thousand dismounted men-at-arms, without including the strong detachments of Genoese bowmen, which the crafty Breton, copying the English tactics, had placed on his flanks. The second line, under the command of the King himself, was composed of three divisions of cavalry, with the outer division thrown slightly forward, to cover the flanks of du Guesclin's "battle." The left division, under Don Tello, comprised some thousand men-at-arms and two thousand genetors : the centre, under the King's supervision, some fifteen hundred chosen knights, and the right division under the Gomez Carillo de Quintania, High Chamberlain of Castile, a thousand

men-at-arms and two thousand genetors. The reserve, or third line, was composed of the Spanish infantry, at least ten thousand strong, but quite unreliable.

Disease, famine, and skirmishes had reduced the Prince's force to less than twenty thousand fighting men. But what they lacked in numbers they made up for in training and *morale*. Like the Spaniards, the Prince drew up his force in three lines. The vaward was entrusted to Lancaster with Chandos to guide him, as he had done so often for the Prince himself. Two thousand five hundred men-at-arms and three thousand archers formed this command; among them were twelve hundred veterans of the Free Companies. The main battle, under his own command, comprised in all some five thousand men-at-arms and an equal number of archers. The Prince led the centre. The right was under the Captal de Buch, the Count of Albret, and Martin Henriquez of Navarre. The left was under Sir Thomas Percy, Sir Oliver de Clisson, and Sir Walter Hewett. The rear of the same strength as the vaward was led by the King of Majorca and contained the Free Companies under Sir Hugh Calverly and Sir Perducas d'Albret, and a large force of Gascons under Armagnac. The percentage of Englishmen in the Prince's army is difficult to calculate. His own retinue was English, and those of his comrades who had followed him to Aquitaine. Several of the Companies were almost entirely recruited from England. The only reinforcements from across the Channel were the force

of men-at-arms and six hundred bowmen brought by his brother Lancaster. The large majority of his force was therefore composed of the troops brought by his Gascon vassals and by the leaders of the Companies, but they had all been trained to perfection in the English art of war.

At midnight on Friday, April 2nd, both hosts were summoned to arms, and at daybreak the advance commenced. King Henry desired to get well clear of the orchards and enclosures round Najera, so that his cavalry might be used to good effect. The Prince was, above all things, anxious to bring his enemy to battle, as provisions were once again getting scarce. The Spaniards "made their men sup and go to bed very early that they might be more fresh and hearty by midnight, when they were commanded to make themselves ready, arm and take the field in battle array: for they well knew that a battle must ensue on the morrow. The Spaniards therefore made themselves merry, for they had the wherewithal to do so; but the English were in the greatest want of provisions: for which reason they were anxious to fight." Each side received early information of the other's preparations from their scouts. The Prince, instead of advancing by the direct road on Najera, screened his advance by a rolling hill on the right of the road. It was not till the Anglo-Gascon force had topped this ascent that the hosts came in view of each other. At the foot of the hill the Prince drew up in battle array, dismounting his whole force

and leaving the horses at the back of the hill under the charge of the rear-guard under the King of Majorca. It was quite clear that both sides were determined to fight, and while the ranks were being dressed and the men-at-arms were adjusting their armour, the leaders on each side set themselves to encourage their men.

Sir John Chandos now came up to the Prince and demanded to be granted the rank of banneret. Ever since his accession to the estates of Saint Sauvier le Vicomte he had been duly qualified to hold such rank ; but he had waited for a suitable occasion on which to demand it. The Prince took the pennon in his own hands, and in the presence of Don Pedro cut off the tail, thus turning it into the square banner of a knight banneret, and returned it to his old friend saying, "Sir John, I return you your banner. God give you strength and power to preserve it." Then the Prince commended himself and his cause to God, and seizing King Pedro's hands he cried out, "Sir King, you shall this day know whether you will have anything in the kingdom of Castile or not." The marshals now came up and reported that everybody was ready, so the advance was given in the name of God and St. George.

The dismounted vawards of du Guesclin and Lancaster met with a clash, the English archers soon having beaten off the cross-bowmen. At the first impact the English were driven back a spear's length but soon each side was locked in a fierce hand-to-hand struggle. So well did du Guesclin and his French and

Spanish knights hold their ground that nought could move them. One enormous Spaniard, by name Martin Ferrand, hurled himself on the famous Chandos and bore him to the ground. "Sir John, however, bethought himself of a knife he had in his bosom, which he drew, and struck so well with it this Martin in his side and back that he gave him his deathblow." In spite of his armour, Chandos then managed to struggle to his feet.

Meanwhile the main battles on both sides joined in the fray. "The Spanish commonalty made use of slings to which they were accustomed, and from which they threw large stones, which at first annoyed the English ; but when their first cast was over and they felt the sharpness of the English arrows, they kept no longer any order." It was the same with the genetors of Don Tello and Gomez Carillo, who could not stand up against the men-at-arms and bowmen of the Captal and Percy, and who galloped off the field in great disorder.

Meanwhile King Henry had made most valiant efforts to succour du Guesclin. Thrice he led his men to the combat, appealing to their oaths of allegiance and to their hatred of Don Pedro. But all in vain ; for the Prince and his division had come up behind Lancaster. It was the Captal and Percy who dealt the final blow. For, on seeing the Spanish wings fleeing from the field, instead of pursuing them, they turned their divisions inwards and crumpled up the flanks of du Guesclin and King Henry. "What will you that I now relate?" sings the Chandos Herald. "There was not in the Prince's army one man so small, who was not

also hardy and bold as a lion." Right well King Henry fought, crying, "Sirs, give me aid for God's sake; you have made me King, and you have taken an oath to assist me by your loyalty." But all in vain, "for the arrows flew thicker than rain in winter-time: they pierced through horse and man, and the Spaniards soon saw they could no longer advance." The iron ring of men-at-arms pressed closer and closer, and at last the Spaniards broke, and none held their ground on Henry's side save the French, Breton, and Norman knights fighting round du Guesclin. So Henry fled, and du Guesclin was forced to surrender.

Such was the battle of Najera. "The Prince shone pre-eminently: he proved his noble birth and the gallantry of his knighthood by his eagerness to seek his enemies and bravely fighting with them." But he also proved that as a tactician he was the equal if not the superior of his father.

The loss on the Spanish side was principally among the commonalty. The pursuit was pressed right up to Najera, where the rout blocked the bridge, and the river being in spate was unfordable. There, more than seven thousand unfortunates perished. Let the Chandos Herald tell the story: "The place where the battle was fought was a beautiful plain, where there was neither bush nor tree for a good league round, by a beautiful river that was both rapid and deep, which on this day enhanced the misery of the Castilians: for the pursuit continued close to the river. More than twelve thousand were drowned. On the bridge before Najera, there I

tell you that very perilous and grievous was the chase. There might you see knights for fear leaping into the water and dying one upon the other. And men said that by great marvel the river was red with blood that flowed from the bodies of the dead men and the horses."

In the actual battle only some five hundred and sixty men-at-arms were killed, the majority of whom belonged to the vanquished. The English losses were absurdly small—four knights, forty men-at-arms, and twenty archers. For the armour-cased men-at-arms, backed by the archers, held at their mercy the heavy Spanish chivalry, the light genetors, and the defenceless rabble.

The battle was fought and won by noon, and the Prince set up his banner on a small hill as the rallying-place for his men. Don Pedro, who had all day long been galloping about trying to meet his brother Henry, now came up and thanked the Prince for the victory; but he replied, "Sir, render your thanks to God, for to Him alone belongs the praise; the victory came from Him and not from me." Great, however, was Don Pedro's disgust when he found that his brother was not among the slain, but had galloped off down the valley. Everybody else was quite contented with the day's work. "They reposed themselves the Saturday night at their ease: they were well enabled to do so, from the plenty of provisions and wine which they had met with. They remained there the whole of the ensuing day, which was Palm Sunday, to refresh themselves,"

Early on Sunday morning Don Pedro arrived at the Prince's pavilion to make a request, which showed how true were the stories of his cruelty ; for he asked his dear lord and fair cousin to deliver up "the traitors of my country, especially my brother, Sancho the bastard, and the others, that I may cut off their heads : for they have done me much injury." The Prince was disgusted at such a request, but as he was anxious to secure the repayment of the great loans advanced to Don Pedro, he did not wish to quarrel with him : accordingly, putting a curb on his feelings, he very wisely answered, "Sir King, I have also a request to make to you ; and I beg of you in the name of our friendship and connexion, that you will not deny it." The King, after all the Prince had done for him, could but reply, "My lord and fair cousin, whatever I have is yours." Upon which the Prince prayed, "Sir King, I beg and intreat of you to pardon all the ills which your rebellious subjects have done against you." After some persuasion the King consented, with the proviso that Gomez Carillo should be excluded from the amnesty. The Lord High Chamberlain of Castile more than any one else had been guilty of the grossest want of good faith to Don Pedro, and the Prince, feeling that treachery ought to be punished, was not able to withstand the appeal of the King, who affirmed, "I would not for all the gold of Seville pardon Gomez Carillo, for he is the very traitor who has done me the greatest dishonour." But none save those who knew Don Pedro had any idea of the scene that was to follow. Hastening to the guard tent,

where the Chamberlain was in the act of dressing, the cruel tyrant ordered the unfortunate man to be seized and dragged out, and then and there "had his throat cut beneath his chin before all the troops." Such conduct could not but disgust the chivalrous Prince of Wales and his gallant Anglo-Gascon knights and barons, and the disgust became deeper when it was reported that on the previous day Don Pedro had assassinated Inigo Lopez de Orozco, an adherent of the Bastard's, who had surrendered to a Gascon knight.

Don Pedro was quick to note the change in the manner of his allies, and anxious to be rid of such tender consciences, and to play the part of the conqueror unshadowed by the Prince, he hastened off to Burgos on the next day, Monday, April 5th. There he was received with acclamations, for the citizens knew well that they had better do their best to mollify the tyrant. Six days later the Prince and his host rode into the town, and for the next month the Anglo-Gascon army lay in quarters in the neighbouring country.

Meanwhile the friction between the restored King and his allies in no way abated. "The Prince in good truth held his court in Burgos, and his wager of battle, so that men might truly say that he had in Spain such power, that all were at his bidding." It was gall and wormwood to Don Pedro to see the popularity of his ally. For since the news of the battle of Najera had been carried through the castles and villages of England, France, and Germany, Spaniards and all

others swore that he was the greatest warrior of the age. From all quarters came reports of the honour done to his name. "The Germans, Flemings and English declared the Prince of Wales was the mirror of knighthood, and that such a prince was worthy of governing the whole world, who by personal prowess had gained three glorious victories."

But it was not only personal jealousy which caused the breach between the Prince and Don Pedro. There was the more contentious question of money. For with Pedro restored to his own the Prince was anxious to hasten home and disband his costly array. But in spite of many protestations Pedro showed no signs of repaying the loans; and to show his ill feeling attempted to treat the Prince as a mere paid mercenary. After much bitter correspondence he consented so far to carry out the terms of the Treaty of Libourne as to publicly ratify them in the Church of St. Mary the Greater in Burgos. So deep were now the dissensions that the Prince refused to enter the city before one of the gates and the flanking walls had been entrusted to his own troops. Then, on May 2nd, with his brother Lancaster and five hundred men-at-arms, he rode into the town and saw Pedro, standing before the high altar, swear with his hands on the Gospel that he would well and truly fulfil his engagements.

In spite, however, of these solemn ratifications, the money was not forthcoming. Under pretence of raising the necessary funds Don Pedro escaped south

to Seville ; while he suggested that the Prince should march to Valladolid, "which is a fertile country," and there await his return at Whitsuntide with the promised treasure. Thither accordingly the Prince marched, but having no longer any money to pay his troops he had to allow them to forage for themselves. "The army was spread over the country about that town, in order to find provisions for themselves and horses : they continued there with little profit to the peasants, for the Companies could not refrain from pillaging." Soon the country round Valladolid was swept bare, and headquarters were successively moved first to Medina del Campo and then to Madrigal. Meanwhile, at the suggestion of his council, the Prince despatched Sir Nele Loryng, Sir Richard Pontchardon, and Sir Thomas Bannister to Seville to remonstrate with Don Pedro on his delay in fulfilling his obligations. Safe at Seville, Don Pedro took up a very different attitude ; instead of attempting to fulfil his promise he turned the tables on the Prince, saying that it was owing to the pillaging of the Companies that the money was not forthcoming, alleging that the marauders had already killed "three or four of our treasurers, who were carrying sums of money towards the Prince our cousin" ; adding with crafty presumption, "That we entreat that he will have the goodness to send out of our kingdom those wicked Companies, and that he will leave us some of his knights to whom in his name we will pay such sums of money as he demands, and which we hold ourselves obliged and bound to pay." This answer,

taken in conjunction with the fact that Don Pedro had already begun to quarrel over the actual sum due, and secretly fomented resistance to the Prince's occupation of the provinces of Biscay and Castro Urdiales, proved, if proof was any longer necessary, that he had no intention of performing his promises.

Following on the top of this bad news came disquieting intelligence from Aquitaine. After Najera the Bastard had escaped to Aragon. Thence he had visited in succession the Count of Foix and Pope Urban V. He was now being secretly aided by Louis, Duke of Anjou, the French King's Lieutenant of Languedoc, and was collecting a force of desperadoes to harry Aquitaine from the direction of Bigorre. These evil tidings weighed heavily on the Prince. He saw no method of recouping himself for the vast expenses he had undertaken. Famine was destroying the *morale* of his army, and disease was carrying off his troops by hundreds. "A proverb, I have heard said," writes the Herald, "that a man should quarrel for his wife, and fight for his bread. Sir, it is no joke for one who has not enough to eat and drink: there were then plenty of people who had no bread to eat."

It was clear, then, that the wisest course was to evacuate Castile, for dysentery and enteric fever were raging among the troops. The King of Majorca was so ill that he had to be left behind. The anxiety of the situation had for the time being completely broken the Prince's spirit, and he himself fell a prey to the fever. A retreat was accordingly ordered on Soria, in Aragon.

There the army halted a month, covering the junction of the eastern and western roads across the Pyrenees. The Prince, in spite of Don Pedro's ingratitude and his wife's entreaties, did not at once hasten home by the direct route through Navarre. He knew that Aragon was not wholly given up to the cause of the Bastard, and he determined to try and win over Pedro, the Ceremonious, from the French alliance.

The advent of the Anglo-Gascon army on the frontier threw Aragon into confusion. Accordingly, when the ambassadors, Sir John Chandos and Sir Hugh Calverly, arrived and made known the proposals of their master a feeling of intense relief pervaded the country. The King, who had hitherto been under the influence of Pedro, of the house of Luna, Archbishop of Tarragona, was glad to assert his authority. Juana, the Bastard's Queen, was sent off to her husband. The engagement between her daughter and the King's son was broken off, and the young Princess was to be affianced to Prince Edward, the Black Prince's elder son. While, if Don Pedro still refused to cede Biscay and Castro Urdiales to the Prince, the King of Arragon would join a confederation composed of Aquitaine, Portugal, and Navarre, and partition Castile.

It seemed as if by diplomacy the Prince was to gain what he could scarce effect by arms. The Bastard was thus to be excluded from Spain and Don Pedro punished. But the Prince bore in his person the seeds of a fatal disease, and his long illness brought this brilliant piece of diplomacy to no effect. However, the news of this

treaty at once brought the King of Navarre to the Prince's side ; for, with Aragon and Aquitaine in alliance, Navarre was completely hemmed in. In great anxiety to please, Charles personally conducted the army through the famous passes, and, after a weak effort, made but little opposition to the passage of the Companies.

From Roncesvalles the army marched straight to Bayonne, where a halt was made for a few days to allow the Prince time to recruit his health. At Bordeaux he was received with great rejoicing. The Princess met him with her son, Prince Edward. "Ladies and knights came there to greet him, and caused much rejoicing : right sweetly did they embrace when they came together. The Prince, who had a gentle heart, kissed his wife and son, and they held each other by the hand, until on foot they reached their lodging."

Thereafter the Prince at once set about to disband his army. The Gascon barons returned to their homes and the English knights to their governments or stewardships, after receiving the Prince's warm thanks and splendid gifts of "gold, silver, and jewels," with his last words ringing in their ears, "Good sirs, by my faith, with all my heart I ought to love you, for you have served me right well. From my heart I thank you." But the Companies remained in Aquitaine awaiting payment. Here then lay the problem, How was the money to be raised? For the Prince swore that, "although Don Pedro had not kept his engagements, it was not becoming for him to act in like manner to those who had served him so well."

CHAPTER XV

THE REVOLT OF AQUITAINE

WITH his return to Bordeaux the Prince found himself once again confronted by all the old difficulties. There were the same questions of jurisdiction, the same contentions about appeal, the same jealousies between English officials and Gascon barons and burghers, and, above all, the same inability to make the revenue meet the expenses. It was this last problem which really lay at the bottom of all these questions. Now, owing to the cost of the Spanish war, it was more pressing than ever. The Companies had to be paid; the Gascon barons and their contingents had to be paid. But the exchequer was empty; the Prince's household plate and jewels were long since sold. It was impossible to cut down the expense of the government; it was possible to cut down enormously the expense of the Prince's household. But here unfortunately both the Prince and the Princess refused to economise; and, as Froissart tells us, "the establishment of the Prince and the Princess was so grand, that no prince in Christendom maintained greater magnificence."

The only solution then seemed to be to attempt to

raise increased revenue by taxation. Sir John Chandos and the Prince's most devoted councillors had pointed out, before the alliance was made with Don Pedro, how fatal to the Prince's popularity such a measure would be. However, there seemed to be nothing else for it, and accordingly, within a fortnight of his return to Bordeaux the Prince summoned the Three Estates of Aquitaine to meet at Saint Emilion.

The most pressing necessity was to raise sufficient money to pay off the Companies who, to the number of six thousand men, were quartered in the country. This was brought home to the deputies by the fact that the representatives of Rouergue found the valley of the Dordogne so overrun with bands of these brigands, who were plundering and ravaging, that they could get no further than Mayonne, and returned home in terror of their lives. After some discussion the assembly at Saint Emilion broke up without coming to any final resolution. But three months later it was reconvened, this time at Angoulême. There, on January 16, 1368, the Three Estates voted a hearth-tax of ten sous for five years, though the Lords of Armagnac, d'Albret, Comminges, Carmaign, de la Barde, Candé, Pincourt, and others expostulated, saying they would take further counsel as to whether they would pay such a tax.

Next to the Spanish war the hearth-tax was the most unfortunate act of the Prince's administration. Sir John Chandos, seeing his advice refused, asked and obtained leave to visit his estate of St. Sauvier le Vicomte in the Cotentin. Meanwhile, throughout

Aquitaine active opposition was organised against the tax. This resistance was started and fanned by the great barons. Their reasons were manifold. First, they objected to their tenants being taxed by the Prince to repay them for the service they had rendered him. Secondly, they found that with the Prince settled in Aquitaine, they had no longer the freedom they had formerly enjoyed when they were subjects of the King of England, who governed the country from Westminster. They found the Prince too exacting, too inquisitive, and too expensive a luxury. This feeling was deeply rooted not only among the baronage, but also among the wealthy merchants and the common people. They could, since the Treaty of Bretigny, no longer play off the King of France against the King of England, and thus secure for themselves advantages and concessions from both. Further, in many of the ceded provinces there still remained a strong desire to return to France. It required, therefore, merely an influential leader to start a strong opposition to the Prince's government.

Such an one there was, John, Count of Armagnac, one of the border barons, powerful, influential, and jealous of the Prince's pretensions, a relative of that Lord d'Albret whom the Prince had so unfortunately insulted just before the Spanish expedition. He, in conjunction with the Counts of d'Albret, Périgord, and Comminges, in May, 1368, entered into negotiations with Charles at Paris, raising the question of who was the actual suzerain of Aquitaine.

Meanwhile, on the whole there was no difficulty in raising the *fouage* from the common people. The town of Rodez may be taken as a typical instance. There the lower city at once paid its share, but the upper town, at the instigation of Armagnac, refused; thereon the consuls were at once arrested, cast into prison, and kept there in spite of offering a sum of six hundred francs to the Prince's treasurer, and sending to the Prince himself a pot of green ginger valued at six florins—substantial gifts for a small community in those days.

But it was not open opposition that the Prince had to fear so much as the secret intrigues between his greater subjects and the crafty ruler of France. In June Charles heard with delight of the engagement of Sir Arnaud Amanieu d'Albret with Marguerite of Bourbon, the younger sister of his queen. This alliance, more than anything else, bound the fortunes of the malcontents with France. On June 30th a secret treaty was made between Charles and Armagnac, and his adherents. The King promised his new friends never to surrender them to the Prince's jurisdiction without their consent, and that he himself would not at any time during the next ten years attempt to enforce a hearth-tax. A few days later, on July 1st, the King presented to his new ally, John of Armagnac, the counties of Bigorre, Gaure, Montréal, and Mezin, all at the moment included in the English Principality of Aquitaine.

Meanwhile the prelates, barons, and lawyers of the realm were occupied in examining the Prince's title to Aquitaine—as to whether he was suzerain lord, or

merely a feudatory of France. On June 28th the council had reported that the "King had good right and just cause for breaking the peace and fighting the English." But Charles was no rash, impetuous blunderer. Time, he saw, was fighting in his favour; every day increased the discontent against his rival, whose health was failing, and who with ill-health lost the personal magnetism and cheery *bonhomie* which had gone so far to establish his popularity. Accordingly, while thanking the council for their advice, he did nothing until December 28th, when, "to assure his conscience," he submitted the question to forty-eight persons of weight, who unanimously answered that the King of France not only could, but ought, "under pain of mortal sin, to enforce his rights as suzerain lord," and listen to the appeal against the Prince of Aquitaine.

The question which at once arises is, How far were these lawyers right in their decision? Now the Prince based his claims to the independence of the Principality on the Treaty of Bretigny, according to which, in return for the King of England renouncing his rights to the crown of France, the King of France promised to renounce his suzerainty over Aquitaine. But the renunciation was only to take effect after the exchange of official letters and the cession by both sides of certain fortresses. The question then is, Were the official letters exchanged, and were the fortresses given up? Several of these fortresses were in the hands of the Free Companies, and, although King Edward ordered them to be evacuated, the French only regained them after

assault or siege. Still the intention was good, and the French did get them. But as regards the question of exchange of documents, there is no doubt that King Edward neglected this point. At the end of 1360, according to the Treaty, the French plenipotentiaries went to Bruges and awaited in vain for the arrival of the English ambassadors. Of this there is no doubt, and certain important Englishmen, for instance the Duke of York, deplored this omission. However, the French did not, at the moment, press the question. When, however, Charles at last considered himself ready, and issued his declaration of lordship over Aquitaine, Edward practically acknowledged the justice of the claim when he maintained that he had never abandoned the title nor the arms of King of France. Moreover, the English Parliament implicitly acknowledged it when, in 1369, they proposed to William de Dormans, the French ambassador, that, if King Charles would renounce his claim to Aquitaine, they would engage that Edward should execute his promises and send the written official documents.

By the beginning of 1369 Charles considered the time for action was ripe. His council had said to him, "Dear Sire, undertake this war with courage; you have a very good cause to induce you to do so: and know, that as soon as you have determined upon it, you will find that many in Aquitaine will turn to your side: prelates, barons, earls, knights, squires, and the citizens of the principal towns: for as the Prince provokes it levying this hearth tax, in the same proportion will

hatred and ill-will follow from all ranks, as they will be very miserable should he succeed in his attempt. As for the men of Poitou, Saintoigne, Rouergue, Quercy, and La Rochelle, from their nature they cannot love the English, who, in their turn, being proud and presumptuous, have not any affection for them, and never had. Add to this that the officers of the Prince are such extortioners, as to lay their hands on whatever they can find, and levy such heavy taxes, in the name of the Prince, that they leave nothing to the subject; besides the gentlemen of the country cannot obtain any offices, for they are all seized on by the English knights attached to the Prince."

All through the latter half of 1368 the situation in Aquitaine became worse and worse. The Prince knew well that the disaffected had entered into some secret intrigue with the King of France, but what their object was he had not yet fathomed. Meanwhile he comforted himself with the belief that Charles was a coward, and would not take any overt action. But it was not only from France that dangers threatened. The King of Aragon, seeing the Prince's star on the wane, basely deserted the alliance he had so gladly made a year before, and now once again joined the side of Henry of Transtamare, who was preparing a second time to hurl Don Pedro from his throne.

It was the Prince himself who provided him with the means of achieving his object. Marshal d'Audenham and the other prisoners taken at Najera had long ago been ransomed, and the money thus obtained had been used

to pay off some of the Companies. But du Guesclin, the famous leader, was kept a close prisoner, and nothing was said of his ransom. The Prince and his council knew well that he alone was able to oppose them successfully in the field, and they had no intention of allowing him an opportunity. But the bold Breton had not only the attributes of a leader, he had also the cunning to understand the character of those by whom he was surrounded. He knew, none better, the Prince's secret vanity, and playing on this he gained his liberty. One day, when the Prince was in better spirits and health than he had been for some time, he asked Sir Bertrand how he was. "My lord," replied Sir Bertrand, "I was never better: I cannot otherwise but be well, for I am, though in prison, the most honoured knight in the world." "How so?" asked the Prince. "They say in France," replied du Guesclin, "as well as in other countries, that you are so much afraid of me, and have such a dread of my gaining my liberty, that you dare not set me free: this is my reason for thinking myself so much valued and honoured." The Prince felt the sting of the remarks doubly since he knew that they were true. "What, Sir Bertrand," he cried out, "do you imagine that we keep you a prisoner for fear of your prowess? By St. George, it is not so: for my good sir, if you will pay me one hundred thousand francs you shall be free." Sir Bertrand, delighted beyond words at the success of his cunning, at once replied, "My lord, through God's will, I will never pay a less sum."

No sooner had he heard his offer accepted than the

Prince repented of what he had done. His council was furious with him, and did not scruple to chide him for his rashness ; they even went further, and suggested that he should refuse to ransom him after all. But the Prince was too chivalrous to go back on his word and told his council, "Since we have granted it, we will keep to it, and not act in any way contrary." Sir Bertrand did not remain much longer in captivity ; the King of France and the Duke of Anjou soon arranged the ransom. Within a month the redoubtable warrior was free, and at the commencement of 1369 he was once again with Henry of Transtamare in Aragon, and helped to win the battle of Montiel, where Don Pedro was defeated, captured, and slain in cold blood by his bastard brother.

Such was the situation when Charles at length determined to enter the fray, and formally declared that King Edward and the Black Prince had broken the feudal law, since they had "usurped and applied to their own use the sovereignty of Guienne and deprived the King of his suzerainty." Accordingly, he claimed that he had the right to confiscate the fief ; but under the pretext of moderation he suggested that the matter might be referred to the Pope for arbitration, knowing full well that the English, who looked on the Pope as his nominee, would at once reject the proposal.

The first intimation the Prince had of the line on which his enemies were working was the arrival of an embassy from Paris. The ambassadors, a knight and a lawyer, put up at an inn at Bordeaux ; it was

late, about the hour of vespers, when they arrived. The next day at the proper time they proceeded to the Abbey of St. Andrew, where the Prince held his Court. On announcing that they were ambassadors of the King of France they were courteously received and introduced to the Prince's presence, where they handed him their credentials. The Prince carefully read these documents and then said, "You are welcome ; now communicate to us all you have to say." "Respected sir," said the lawyer, "here are letters which were given to us by our honoured lord the King of France ; which letters we are engaged on our faith to publish in your presence, for they mainly relate to you." The Prince was astonished at the announcement, flushed up, then restrained himself and said, "Speak, speak ; all good news we will cheerfully hear." Meanwhile the barons and knights who were present closed round, full of amazement at this strange embassy. The lawyer then read the summons : "Charles, by the grace of God King of France, to our nephew the Prince of Wales and Aquitaine, health. Whereas several prelates, barons, knights, universities, fraternities, and colleges of the county and district of Gascony, residing and inhabiting upon the border of our realm, together with many others from the county and duchy of Aquitaine, have come before us in our court, to claim justice for certain grievances and unjust oppression, which you, through weak counsel and foolish advice, have been induced to do them ; and at which we are much astonished. Therefore in order to obviate and remedy such things,

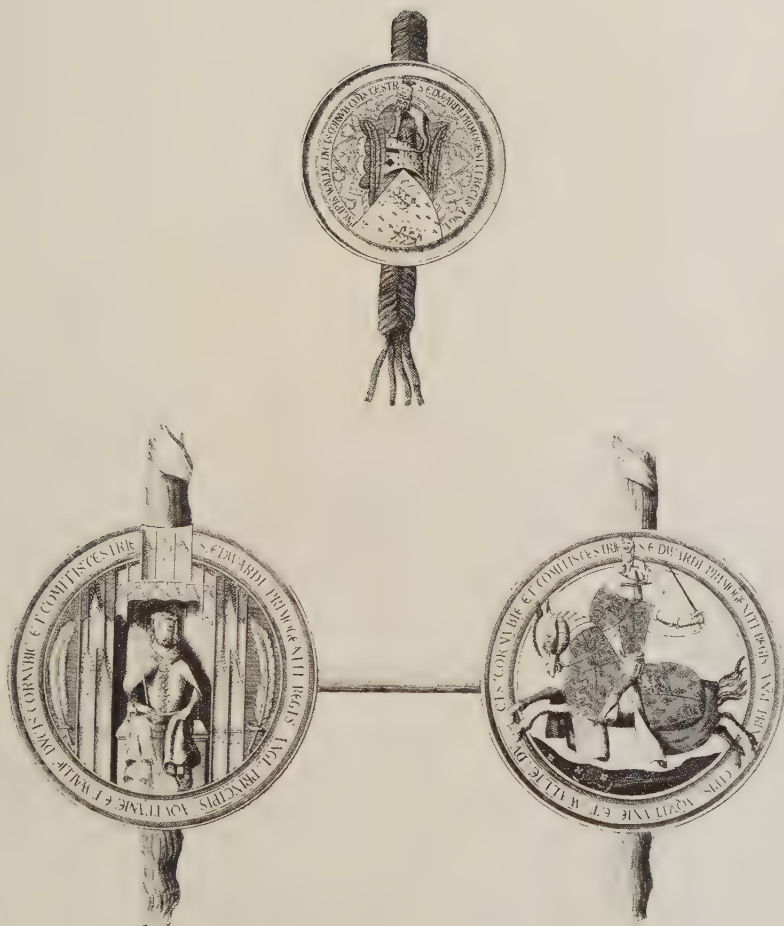
we do take cognizance of their cause ; inasmuch that we, of our royal majesty and sovereignty, order and command you to appear in our city of Paris in person, and that you show and present yourself before us, in our chamber of peers, to hear judgment pronounced on the complaints aforesaid, and grievances done by you to your subjects, who claim to be heard, and have the jurisdiction of our court. Let there be no delay in obeying this summons, but set out as speedily as possible after hearing this order read. In witness whereof we have affixed our seals to these presents. Given at Paris the 26th day of January, 1369."

As the letter was read the Prince's astonishment and indignation waxed greater and greater. When the reading ceased he waited for a moment, eyeing the Frenchmen and shaking his head, then at last he burst out, "We shall willingly attend on the appointed day at Paris, since the King of France sends for us ; but it will be with our helmet on our head, and accompanied by sixty thousand men."

The ambassadors, in terror at his wrath, fell on their knees, crying out that they were but the humble instruments of the King of France. The Prince quieted them by telling them that his anger was not against them, but against those who had sent them, adding, "Your King has been ill advised thus to take the part of our subjects, and to wish to make himself the judge of what he has nothing to do with, nor any right to interfere. It shall be clearly demonstrated to him that when he gave possession and seisin of

the whole Duchy of Aquitaine to our lord and father by his commissioners, he surrendered also all jurisdiction over it; and all those who have now appealed against us have no other court to apply to but to England, and to our lord and father. It shall cost a hundred thousand lives before it shall be otherwise."

Thereon the Prince left the audience chamber, while the ambassadors returned to their inn, dined, and set off to report the result of their embassy to the Duke of Anjou, who was awaiting them at Toulouse. Deep depression settled over all the Court at the Abbey of St. Andrew. "Good sirs, by my faith, it seems from what I can see that the French hold me as dead," said the Prince to his friends. They knew well that the Prince was not the man he used to be; many a day he had to spend in bed, and he was too often moody and morose. Throughout the great audience hall many were the bitter curses hurled at the head of the French King, and the treacherous Count of Armagnac and the Lord d'Albret. But for the moment anger against the ambassadors, who had thus insulted their lord, burned most fiercely, and the boldest suggested to the Prince that the two messengers should be killed. The Prince forbade it; but he could not altogether forgive the men who had been the instruments of his humiliation. Hearing they had taken the road to Toulouse and had not waited to receive any passports, he said to his councillors, "It is not right that they should so easily leave our county and go and relate their prattle to



SEALS OF EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE
AFTER THE ORIGINALS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

the Duke of Anjou, who loves us little, and say how they have summoned us personally in our own palace. They are, upon due consideration, messengers from my vassals, the Count of Armagnac, the Lord of Albret, the Counts of Périgord, Comminges, and Carmaign, rather than from the King of France: so that for the vexation they have given us we counsel that they should be detained and thrown in prison." So the unfortunate ambassadors were arrested and imprisoned. The King of France was furious at their arrest, and at the Prince's contemptuous answer to his summons, though for the moment he feared lest he should at once appear with his sixty thousand men. But the Duke of Anjou rejoiced, for he foresaw that war was now inevitable.

The King of France continued to act with great cunning. During 1368 he had done his best to discredit the Black Prince with his father. The lever he had used had been the Companies. For the Prince, after paying them all he could, had ordered them out of Aquitaine. They had then poured up the Loire and entered France, pillaging and devastating right and left. Charles at once wrote to King Edward that, at his son's instigation, the Companies were pillaging France; and Edward wrote to the Prince enjoining him to respect the treaty. Meanwhile Charles most scrupulously continued to pay his father's ransom, and also to complain of the infraction of the treaty by the English. So circumstantial were his tales that a party sprang up at the English Court

“who said that the Prince was rash and impatient and desired nothing so much as war.” Consequently, when the King of France’s ambassadors arrived in England to open the question of the suzerainty of Aquitaine, there was a strong feeling that the Prince was mainly responsible for the difficulties and much to be blamed.

The ambassadors, the Count of Saarbrücken and William de Dormans, Chancellor of Dauphiné, had orders to act circumspectly and to throw dust in Edward’s eyes. In pretence of friendship Charles sent his cousin Edward fifty pipes of wine. Meanwhile he was making every preparation for war. The Companies were secretly engaged for the French service. Edward’s old allies in the Low Countries were detached by promises and bribes. Aragon and Scotland already were allied to France, so that, when war was at last declared, England found herself isolated in Europe.

By April 26th King Edward began to suspect these treacherous designs, and sent back the fifty pipes of wine and the French ambassadors. Strangely enough, Charles had almost the same day decided to throw off his mask, and the ambassadors passed at Dover on April 29th the French King’s scullion, who had been despatched out of bitter insult, to make the declaration of war.

While King Edward at Westminster listened to the insidious explanations of the King of France, the Prince of Wales at Angoulême had a much juster appreciation of Charles’s intentions. Accordingly, soon after

the extraordinary summons to Paris, he wrote to the leaders of the Free Companies, who were still encamped on the Loire, "not to march to any great distance from that river, for he should shortly have occasion for them, and would find them employment." The majority received the news with hearty content, but a certain number of Gascons determined to throw in their cause with the King of France. However, this would not have mattered if only the Prince had been himself. Unfortunately the enteric fever caught in Spain had brought in its train an attack of dropsy, and so quickly did the disease gain ground, during the early months of 1369, that he could no longer mount a horse. "The King of France had received accurate information of all this, and had been furnished with the statement of the case drawn up in writing ; from which the physicians and surgeons of France judged that he had a confirmed dropsy, and declared him unable ever to recover."

Meanwhile, although the King of France refused to allow the Duke of Anjou to declare war until he had successfully detached the allies of England, the rebellious barons commenced operations on their own account. They successfully surprised a small English force under Sir Thomas Wake, who had been despatched to inspect the fortifications of Rhodéz, one of the outlying fortresses in the Garonne valley. On hearing of this act of war, the Prince at once wrote to his old friend Chandos and summoned him to his aid. The Seneschal, much as he disapproved of the

measures which had caused the rebellion, was not one to shirk, once war had broken out. Hastening from the Cotentin to Angoulême, he met the Prince, his master, and together they drew up the plan of campaign.

As early as January 27th the Prince had issued a manifesto to the prelates, barons, and commons of Aquitaine, pointing out that the cause of all the difficulty was the Count of Armagnac; that, in spite of all favours shown to him, he had stirred up a revolt, although, if it had not been for the Prince, he would have still been languishing in the prison of the Count of Foix; that, owing to his machinations, war would break out once again between England and France, "a greater ill than all the good he was ever likely to do in his life"; that the Prince counted on the devotion and fidelity of his vassals, whom he warned against those who would seduce them; that, as for himself, he was resolved to go to any sacrifice, even to give up his life, to defeat the intrigues of the Count, and to prevent him from molesting and worrying his Gascons. The manifesto ended with a postscript, in which the Prince published the latest intelligence, that the Princes of the blood of France had allied themselves with Armagnac and were intending to overrun Aquitaine, and that they were bent on plunder and rapine.

On February 22nd Armagnac issued a counter-proclamation at Rhodéz. He maintained that he had sacrificed health and treasure for the Prince; that the

Spanish expedition had cost him six hundred thousand golden florins; that the Prince still owed him two hundred thousand and refused to pay; that, as regards his deliverance from the Count of Foix, he had repaid the ransom to the Prince; that the Prince's officials in Rouergue had annexed his jurisdictions and confiscated his possessions; that the *fouage* was impossible, for his unfortunate vassals were so poor that they were already starving; that he could not get justice either at Bordeaux or at Westminster; that therefore, after consulting legal advisers, he had appealed to his legitimate sovereign, the King of France; that it was absurd to accuse him of stirring up war, for, if only the Prince would appear before the Parliament of Paris, all would be peacefully arranged; that he appealed to the good people of Aquitaine to uphold him in his just struggle against the Prince. His appeal was not in vain, for by March 18th, just two months after the Prince's summons to Paris, nine hundred and twenty-one castles, towns, or strong places of the counties of Armagnac, Rhodéz, Limoges, Quercy, and Agenais had answered to the summons and deserted the Prince.

The situation, when Chandos rejoined headquarters at Angoulême, was as follows: On the south-west John, Duke of Berri, had overrun Auvergne, invaded Rouergue, and taken La Roche-Valsergue. The Duke of Anjou and the Count of Périgord, based on Toulouse, had invaded Aquitaine by the line of the Garonne. Along the northern frontier of Poitou, Touraine, and

Anjou, Jean de Bueil, William des Bordes, and Louis de Saint Julien were successfully driving back the English. If Edward had been himself, he would have struck quickly and in strength against his foes in the south and then turned against the enemy in the north. But he was practically bedridden, and had lost his old grip on affairs. Still, his dispositions were good: he sent Chandos, the Captal de Buch, and Guischart d'Angle to Montauban to hold the Garonne valley, and Simon Burley to Poitou to cover the northern part of the Principality, while he remained with a strong reserve at Angoulême awaiting reinforcements. The first to arrive were some two thousand of the Companies under Sir Hugh Calverly.

Meanwhile he anxiously expected the troops promised him from England. These, under the command of Edmund, Earl of Cambridge, and the Earl of Pembroke, one of his brothers-in-law, had landed early in the spring at St. Malo. Owing to the expedition despatched to cover Ponthieu, they were few in number; indeed, when joined at Nantes by the Companies north of the Loire, they only totalled some three thousand men-at-arms and archers.

Chandos' military skill did much to re-establish the English cause in the south, but in the north Sir Simon Burley suffered a severe defeat at Lusignan, and later at La Roche Posay, where he was captured. "The Prince of Wales was much vexed and bitterly lamented the capture of his good knight Sir Simon Burley, whom he loved, as indeed he had reason to

love; for to say the truth, he was a most expert man-at-arms for his time, very courageous, and had always carried himself valiantly for his lord the King of England and his country. . . . It is a common saying, that one man is worth a hundred, and a hundred is not worth one man; for in truth, it happens sometimes, that by the good conduct and courage of one man, a whole country is preserved, while another person may totally ruin and destroy it." For this reason the Prince recalled the stout Sir John, made him Seneschal of Poitiers on the retirement of Sir James Audeley, and sent him to supervise operations on the northern frontier, leaving Sir Robert Knolles to guard the south.

The wisdom of the decision was soon shown, for the combined forces of Chandos and Pembroke quickly made themselves masters of the important fortress of La Roche sur Yon. Chandos, in spite of his age, was as vigorous as ever, and determined to wear down the enemy by a systematic series of small expeditions; but unfortunately the Earl of Pembroke was vain and silly. He listened to the cavilling of the knights of his staff, who, fresh from England, were full of their own importance, and said to him, "It is proper for you who are of such high birth and rank, to act for yourself and let Sir John Chandos do his part, who is but a knight bachelor when compared with you." Hence Chandos had to bear the brunt of covering the frontier by himself, while Pembroke frittered away his strength in useless adventures. Still, when Chandos

heard that the Earl had fallen into an ambushade, he hastened with what few troops he had to his assistance and rescued him and his men. But some weeks later he himself was surprised near Chauvigny at the bridge of Lussac. There, while attempting to defend one of his squires, he tripped on the long white mantle he was wearing over his armour and fell to the ground. He had neglected to close his visor in the morning, and the surprise had been so sudden that he had had no time to do so before the fray commenced. So, as he lay on the ground, a certain Jean de Saint Martin stabbed him through the eye with his sword.

The death of Chandos was a great blow to the English cause in Aquitaine ; for, with the Prince an invalid and Chandos and Audeley dead, there was no one left who was capable of enforcing his will on the various leaders of columns in different parts of the county. More and more the campaign degenerated into a sporadic war of posts.

The blow was bitter indeed to the Prince, who was still grieving for his mother, the good Queen Philippa, whose death had taken place in August. As Froissart tells us, Chandos' death was a real calamity. "Sir John was sincerely regretted by his friends of each sex ; and some lords of France bewailed his loss. Thus it happens through life. The English loved him for all the excellent qualities he was possessed of. The French hated him because they were afraid of him. Not but that I have heard him at the time regretted by renowned Knights of France ; for they said it was a



SUPPOSED TOMB OF SIR JOHN CHANDOS NEAR THE BRIDGE OF LUSSAC

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pity he was slain, and that if he could have been taken prisoner, he was so wise and full of devices, he would have found some means of establishing a peace between France and England ; and was so much beloved by the King of England and his Court, that they would have believed what he said in preference to all others." "God have his soul in keeping," he adds, "for the sake of his goodness, for three hundred years past, there was no one more gentle or more distinguished by every good and noble virtue, than he."

The misfortunes of the end of 1369 were followed by fresh disasters in the following year. The Dukes of Anjou and Berri swept all before them. Aided by du Guesclin, who had been recalled from Spain, the Duke of Anjou burst into Agenais and penetrated to within five leagues of Bordeaux, while the Duke of Berri swept into Limousin. The only success the English gained was at Belleperche, in the Bourbonnois, where some of the Companies captured the dowager Duchess of Bourbon. The Prince was displeased at this war against women, but used the opportunity to effect an exchange by which he regained Sir Simon Burley.

While the Dukes of Anjou and Berri invaded the county the Prince was still bedridden at Angoulême ; but the news that they were contemplating a combined march on that city stirred him from his lethargy, and he swore "that his enemies should never find him shut up in town or castle, and that he would immediately march and take the field against them." While from his bed he was making preparations to take the field,

and ordering his forces to concentrate at Cognac, reinforcements started from England. At the end of June the Duke of Lancaster left Plymouth, with a small body of three hundred men-at-arms, and five hundred archers, entrusted with a delicate mission. He was ordered to advise his brother to remit the *fouage* and to pardon all rebels who would submit : in fact he was designated as the Prince's successor, and commissioned if possible to arrogate to himself his brother's powers.

Lancaster, who had not sought these favours, and had no desire to supplant his brother, could not but dislike the situation. However, when he arrived at Cognac where the Prince had already arrived in a litter, he found the difficulties solved themselves. For the Black Prince was so ill that he could do no business, and gladly handed over the control to the Duke.

The news of the concentration at Cognac completely upset the French plans of campaign. So dreaded was the Prince, that the fact that he was again about to take the field at once caused the Duke of Anjou to withdraw towards Toulouse, even though he had with him the famous du Guesclin. But the Duke of Berri, more hardy, continued to advance, and on August 24th Limoges fell an easy prey into his hands, owing to the treachery of the Bishop, Jean de Cros, the old friend and counsellor of the Prince. The news of this dastardly act threw the Prince into a fury. "He swore by the soul of his father, which he had never perjured, that he would have Limoges back again, that he would not attend to anything until he had done this, and that

he would make the inhabitants pay dearly for their treachery."

Early in September, leaving Sir Thomas Felton and the Captal de Buch to watch Bergerac and guard his communications, the Prince had himself placed in a litter and set out at the head of three thousand men-at-arms, a thousand archers and a thousand footmen for Limoges. The Bishop and townspeople heard of his advance with fear and trembling, but they were no longer their own masters. The French leaders, Sir Jean de Villemar, Sir Hugh de la Roche, and Sir Roger de Beaufort, were determined to hold out till relieved by the Duke of Berri. Limoges was well victualled and supplied with artillery. For more than a month the siege lasted—the English mining, the French countermining; and skirmishes above and below ground were continual. At last a large mine constructed by Lancaster was fired, a hundred yards of wall came crashing down, and the English rushed into the doomed city.

The Prince in his litter was one of the first to cross the breach, and with wrath and brutality had given the word that the place might be utterly sacked. Even the callous Froissart is moved to pity by the scene which followed. "You would then have seen pillagers, active in mischief, running through the town, slaying men, women and children, according to orders. It was a most melancholy business; for all ranks, ages and sexes cast themselves on their knees before the Prince, begging for mercy; but he was so inflamed with

passion and savage that he listened to none ; but all were put to the sword, where they were found, even those who were not guilty, for I know not why the poor were not spared, who could not have had any part in the treason. There was not that day in the city of Limoges any heart so hardened, nor had any sense of religion, who did not deeply bewail the unfortunate events, passing before their eyes ; for upwards of three thousand men, women and children were put to death that day. God have mercy on their souls, for they were veritable martyrs."

The wretched Bishop was found and dragged before the Prince, "who eyeing him indignantly told him, he should have his head cut off, and ordered him out of his presence." Meanwhile the French men-at-arms defended themselves gallantly, and when the Prince's fury had spent itself, they were permitted to surrender. The massacre was stopped, and, at the entreaty of Lancaster, the Bishop's life was spared.

The sack of Limoges must for ever remain a heavy blot on the Prince's escutcheon. His admirers have tried to explain it away or to minimise it, but in vain. That Froissart has exaggerated the number of the slain may be true ; but the fact remains that a brutal massacre did take place, and that the Prince authorised it. Ill-health no doubt had shattered his balance of mind, but this does not excuse such cruelty. Others have advanced the plea that the sack of Limoges, like the massacre of Drogheda, was not a mere exhibition of loss of temper, but a political act to check the growth

of treason ; but none can deny that a great mistake was made and a brutal crime committed, and that this brutality in the end was found to be useless.

The siege of Limoges was the Prince's last political act in Guienne. The effort caused a return of the disease. Crippled in mind and body he was borne back to Cognac. There, soon after his return, early in October, as his last act of sovereignty, he granted to his brother Lancaster, in tail, the town and castle of La Roche sur Yon and Bergerac. Three days later he resigned into his hands the government of Aquitaine, making him his lieutenant there until June 24th of the following year. Thereafter there remained but the final transfer of power to Lancaster before the estates at Bordeaux, where the Prince addressed the barons and knights of Gascony, and besought them well and faithfully to serve his brother Lancaster, which they promised to do, "and they all kissed him on the mouth," thus binding themselves to fight for him in defence of the country.

Then the Prince was free to return to England. But ill-fate seemed to be dogging his steps at every turn, for before he could be carried to the ship his elder son Edward, a promising boy of six, was claimed by death. Broken in mind and body, the Prince left Bordeaux before the funeral, and early in January, 1371, embarked on his painful passage to Plymouth.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAST YEARS

THE Prince's vessel, escorted by a fleet carrying the Earls of Cambridge and Pembroke and five hundred archers, had a favourable passage and arrived safely at Southampton. There a halt was made for a couple of days to allow the invalid to rest, and then the whole party escorted his litter to Windsor, where the royal family remained united for some time.

The Prince's health remained very indifferent, and after a time he was glad to go to Berkhamstead to his home. The disease had now such a grip on him that he was seldom free from it. At times it recurred with great severity; bouts of intense pain were followed by long periods of syncope, which were sometimes so protracted that the physicians believed he was dead. But between these attacks he retained his old animation and zest of life. No longer able to undertake bodily exercise, the tournament and the passage of arms lost their attractions for him, and he began to show an appreciation for affairs of State which he had never before displayed.

But it was not only physical causes which produced this change in his character. The King himself was failing and no longer resented, but was glad when his sons offered to relieve him of some of the burden of government; hence the Prince was not now restrained from political action. But it was not so much the need of helping his father as the desire to prepare the way for his son, which brought out his latent political abilities. He knew full well that his father was rapidly losing his strength, and that he himself could not look forward to many years of life; thus he foresaw that his boy Richard must come to the throne at an early age. The government of a minor had never so far been happy either for the people or the monarch; and many causes were conspiring to bring about a period of great difficulty for England. It was clear that the French fortune was in the ascendant; that England would soon feel the full meaning of an unsuccessful war; the disillusionment, the heavy taxation, and the consequent discontent. Ever since the Black Death and the Statute of Labourers, capital and labour had been bitterly opposed to each other. The country was suffering from the want of capable leaders. The great soldiers and statesmen of the early years of the reign were dead and gone. The Church bore within itself the seeds of decay, the national party was at daggers drawn with the Papal party, and doctrinal strife had shown its head. Lastly, there was the disquieting question as to the aims of John of Gaunt, the greatest feudatory in the kingdom, the most capable

of the remaining sons of the King, and by far the most ambitious. What were his objects? Had he really, as his enemies suggested, the design of putting aside his nephews the young Richard and the young Mortimer and someday making himself King? The Prince, when well, could not believe this of his favourite brother, to whose care he had entrusted his Principality of Aquitaine; but at times, when the disease was heavy upon him, he found it hard to shake off the suspicion. But in September, 1371, John of Gaunt married Constance of Castile, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel, and from that moment the Prince's anxieties were considerably relieved, for it was clear that Lancaster had set his heart indeed on a throne, not that of England, but of Castile. Be this as it may, the Prince took every opportunity of enforcing the claims of his son, as on the occasion of the expedition to relieve Thouars, when he made the King, his brother Lancaster, and the assembled baronage swear that, if he and his father fell in the expedition, the young Richard should be proclaimed King.

The year 1371 was indeed a melancholy one for Prince Edward. Though well enough at the beginning of May to meet the Convocation of Canterbury in the parlour of the Savoy Palace, and arrange with them about the contribution they should make towards the expenses of the war, he was becoming more and more an invalid. Week by week the ill news continued to arrive from Aquitaine, and he had to remain resting at Berkhamstead. Lancaster had only accepted the

position of lieutenant on the understanding that he was to be relieved by June 24, 1371, and on the condition that the Prince found the pay for the troops and for the government. But with province after province rising in revolt, the Administration was paralysed, and, by February, the revenue no longer enabled the Duke to pay his troops. The Prince could send him no help from England. Accordingly, in July, Lancaster resigned his position, and Sir Thomas Felton the Seneschal and the Captal de Buch the Constable took on his duties. These two soldiers, good subordinates as they were, could not hope to succeed in command without some one who could make his authority felt over the whole field of operations. Thus day by day the county slipped away from the English allegiance.

The only cheering event in the year was the loyal welcome offered on his return by the City of London. The Mayor and Council had given expression to the desires of the citizens by raising a sum of money to buy a new service of plate for the Prince and the Princess. It was a magnificent present that the City sent him, and it amply replaced the plate he had melted down to pay the expenses of the Spanish campaign. There were six large gilded pots, one spice plate, three gilded basins, and six ewers and six basins of silver, twelve silver bottles, three dozen silver beakers, twenty silver chargers, ten dozen silver porringers, five dozen silver salt cellars, one gilded cup in the shape of an acorn, and a pair of ivory bottles. The cost of this service was £588 10s. 4d. The Prince himself was too ill

to write and thank the City in February; but the letter still exists in the City archives in which the Princess Joan wrote to express her thanks.

During the first half of 1372 the French continued their unbroken success in Aquitaine, and by August they had mastered Mortmorillon, Moncontour, Saintes, Poitiers, and La Rochelle. In July news arrived in England that Thouars, the last great fortress, was hard pressed, and had agreed to surrender, if not relieved by September 30th. It was time that an effort should be made to re-establish the prestige of the English arms both on land and sea; for Pembroke had been defeated in a fleet action off La Rochelle by the armada of Castile.

The news of the desperate straits of Thouars sent a thrill through the country. The aged King determined once again to buckle on his armour. The gallant Prince Edward swore that even, though he might die on the voyage, he would accompany his father.

Luckily an expedition destined for Calais had been preparing in the southern ports under the eye of Lancaster, so soon as a fleet of four hundred ships, carrying four thousand men-at-arms and ten thousand bowmen was ready to start. King Edward had appointed the Prince's son Richard guardian of the kingdom. Before the fleet weighed anchor the Prince, grievously ill as he was, determined to make one more effort to smooth the way for his son. So, in the cabin of the King's ship, the *Grace de Dieu*,

he caused the assembled nobility to swear that if he and his father died they would make his son king. "The earls, barons and commonalty were so much attached to the Prince for his gallantry at home and abroad, that they cheerfully assented to the request; the King first and then his children and afterwards the lords of England. The Prince put them upon their oaths, and made them sign and seal to observe this arrangement before they separated."

The elements fought against the English cause. It was the last day of August before the fleet weighed anchor. Before it was out of sight of the Hampshire coast a strong south-west gale arose, the forerunner of the Equinox. For a whole month the sailors tried in vain to make Ushant, but they never could round the Breton promontory; so September 30th came and Thouars surrendered, and the costly expedition put back home.

Nine weeks the Prince spent on shipboard. The discomfort of the voyage, and the disappointment at the failure of the expedition brought on another serious attack. It was now certain that he would never again be able to return to Aquitaine. Accordingly, on October 6th, he surrendered back to his father the Principality of Aquitaine and all his claims and titles thereto. The notification of his abdication was made to Parliament at the end of October by Sir Guy Brian. "You do this of your own free will?" asked Sir Guy. "Yes," replied the Prince. The ostensible reason of the surrender was the fact that

the revenue of the county was no longer sufficient to meet the expenses; but the real reason, as we have suggested, was his state of health.

In November, 1373, the Prince once again appeared in London and took his seat in Parliament. There were two burning questions—first how to find the money to pay for his brother Lancaster's unsuccessful raid from Calais to Bordeaux, and secondly how to curb the pretensions of the Pope, which grew year by year as the fortune of the country declined. It was only after a consultation between the Lords and Commons that a grant was arranged under stringent rules as to its collection. The question of Papal interference was equally pressing.

The Pope claimed to be lord paramount as well as spiritual lord of England by the gift of King John. On the strength of this he commanded King Edward to raise a subsidy by way of talliage to help him to subdue the rebellious Florentines. Thereon the King summoned a great council at Westminster after Pentecost, 1374. The King, being himself in failing health, entrusted the proceedings to the Black Prince, who seems to have had one of his brief periods of freedom from pain. To the council came William Wittlesey, Archbishop of Canterbury, the lords spiritual and temporal, and four doctors of divinity as assessors. They were the Provincial of the Friar Preachers; John Owtred, a monk of Durham; John Mardisley, a Friar Minor; and Thomas Ashbourne, an Augustinian Friar.

The Chancellor opened the proceedings by reading

the Papal bull, and then asked the Archbishop whether the Pope was "*dominus omnium*," as he claimed to be, to which the Archbishop and Bishops responded, "Yes." The Provincial of the Friars begged to be excused. It was a hard question, said he, and he could give no answer before singing the hymn "Veni Creator" in the Mass of the Holy Spirit, according to the rules of his Order. The monk of Durham had no doubt that Peter was granted both temporal and spiritual power, and quoted the text about the two swords. But Mardisley and Ashbourne were strongly opposed to the doctrine of temporal authority, quoting passages of Scripture and of the Fathers to prove their point. Ashbourne alleged that Peter was known by the keys and Paul by the sword. "The Pope," said he, "is Peter carrying the keys in *foro confessionis*. You, my lord Prince, was wont to be Paul carrying the sword. But because you have laid aside the sword of the Lord, Peter will not recognise Paul. Wield it therefore and he will do so."

The Archbishop was extremely annoyed with Mardisley and Ashbourne, and said there was good counsel in England without the friars. To which the Prince replied, "It was your own stupidity which obliged us to call them; had we followed your counsel we would have lost the kingdom."

On the following day the Archbishop began to waver, and said he did not know what answer to give. But the Prince would not be put off thus; he had no intention of allowing the Papacy any shadow of claim over the future realm of his son. "Answer, you ass!" he

fiercely said to the prelate; "your duty is to inform all of us." To this the Archbishop, thoroughly frightened, replied that he had no wish for Papal domination in England. Thereon the bishops with one voice said that this exactly expressed their opinion. When the monk of Durham's turn came he said he was sure the Pope was not over-lord. "Where are, then, the two swords?" asked the Prince, with dry humour. "My Lord, I am better informed than I was," replied Owtred.

So once and for all the Prince scotched the claims of the Papacy. But the story is instructive, as it shows that the prelates were almost to a man at heart Ultramontanes. It explains one of the causes of the weakness of the central government since half the House of Peers looked to a foreigner as their head. It also explains the cause of the early success of the new theology. For Wycliff stood for the national cause against the foreigner; for the upholder of the tillers of the soil against the great ecclesiastical landowners. It accounts also for the latter stages of the Hundred Years' War, for the prelates, finding their position threatened, attempted to direct attention from themselves by posing as patriots and fanning into flame the national jealousies.

Ill-health prevented the Prince from himself undertaking the negotiations with the Papacy which resulted from this Conference at Westminster. His brother Lancaster was entrusted with them in his stead, and during the greater part of 1374 and 1375 Conferences

were held at Bruges, with the double object of arriving at a permanent treaty of peace with France and a concordat with the Pope. The nation watched those negotiations with great anxiety. But they resulted in nothing. A year's truce was made with France, but the Pope, while making some small concessions, refused to give way on the greater question, and virtually maintained that he could do what he liked with the possessions of the Church in England.

The old King was now a mere cypher in the hands of the extreme Church party who upheld the Papal authority. This party had made an unholy alliance with Alice Perrers, the King's mistress. By her influence certain nobles, notably Lord Latimer, the Chamberlain, and Lord Neville of Raby, the Steward of the Household, aided by certain financiers, prominent among whom was Richard Lyons, virtually ruled the kingdom in the King's name for their own profit. It was long since England had been in such a pitiable state. John of Gaunt, occupied with the negotiations at Bruges and his schemes to win the Castilian crown, seemed to neglect the political situation at home. He made no effort to save his father's honour, and thus gave a handle to his enemies, who began to declare that he also was in alliance with Alice Perrers. The drought of the summer of 1375 brought in its turn famine and fear of the plague, and consequently no Parliament was summoned that year.

Meanwhile the Black Prince, from his sick chamber at Berkhamstead, saw with grief the destruction of the

fair heritage of his son Richard. But bedridden as he was he could do but little. When, however, in the spring of 1376 a Parliament was at last summoned he had himself carried up to London. The Parliament was originally called for February 12th, but it did not meet till April 28th. Once it met, the two well-defined parties were at once at loggerheads. The Court party boasted of the influence of Alice Perrers. The national party at once turned to the Black Prince as their head. The Prince now, for the first time in his career, found himself in opposition to the King; but now he was fighting not for his own hand, but for the heritage of his son and for the welfare of the nation at large. Moreover, he was not really opposing his father, but those who for their own purposes had dragged his father's name through the dust. Lancaster himself felt this, and, until a fierce attack was opened on his friends, he remained, as it were, neutral.

The Commons of England, strong in their trust in the Black Prince, determined once and for all to clean the Augean stable. The Prince had an able adviser in William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester. Under the leadership of Peter de la Mar, the Speaker, they made an examination of the public accounts. Latimer and Lyons were found to have used the public money for their own interests, and were impeached and punished. Lyons, indeed, had the audacity to try to escape his just condemnation by sending the Prince a bribe of a thousand pounds. "The Prince's weighing in the balance of justice his lewd action, refused to

accept of the gold that was sent hym, sending back all that the sayed Richard had presented hym wyth, and byddyngge hym to reap the fruits of hys wages, and drink as he had brued." The Commons next proceeded to have Alice Perrers, Lord Neville, and Sir Richard Sturry, a Lollard courtier, banished from the royal Court.

Unfortunately the excitement of the struggle was too great for the Prince. To be near Parliament he had taken up his residence with the King at Westminster, instead of inhabiting his house in Fish Street. During the first few days of June it was clear that he was failing fast, and he had to give up the political struggle, and turn his attention to preparing himself for death. On June 7th he made his will, "he dystributed large gyfts as well to his household servants as to others of what station or condition so ever, and he humbly requested the Kynge hys father, that he would ratifie hys gyfts, and wolde cherishe and favour his servants and friends, for that, sayed he, they have deserved to have many other thynges both of your gyfts and myne, and that he wolde suffer hys debts speedily to be payed of hys own proper goodes."

Thereafter he called in his son Richard, "although but a little one he commanded hym, upon payne of hys curse, he shold never chainge or taike away gyfts that he att hys death gave unto hys servants." Then, as the Chandos Herald relates, "the Prince caused his chambers to be opened and all his followers to come in, who in his time had served him and served him

with a free will. 'Sirs,' said he, 'pardon me, for by the faith I owe you, you have served me loyally, though I cannot of my own means render to each his guerdon; but God by His most holy Name and saints will render it to you.' They each wept heartily, and mourned right tenderly; all who were present, earl, baron, and batchelor. Then said he in a clear voice, 'I recommend to you my son, who is but yet young and small, and pray, that as you have served me so from your heart you would serve him.' Then he called the King his father, and the Duke of Lancaster, his brother, and recommended to them his wife, and his son whom he greatly loved, and straightway entreated them so that each was willing to give his aid. Each swore upon the book, and they promised him at once that they would comfort his son and maintain him in his right. All the princes and barons swore all round to this and the noble Prince of fame gave them an hundred thanks." The effort brought on another attack, and the unfortunate Prince was racked by the most cruel pain. Meanwhile his friends stood round with aching hearts watching his misery. "The right noble excellent Prince felt such pain at heart, that it almost burst with mourning and sighing and crying out in his pain. So great suffering did he endure, that there was no man living who had seen his agony but would have heartily pitied him."

But the end was not yet. The Prince's wonderful constitution withstood the shock, and he rallied a little. Meanwhile the doors of his chamber remained wide

open, and his attendants and friends passed through one by one to take a last sorrowful farewell. "The Prince had commanded that his doore sholde be shutte to none, not to the least boy." Among those who entered the room was Sir Richard Sturry, one of those whom the Prince's party had attacked in Parliament. Jealous of his father's honour the Prince raised himself in bed and flared out at him, upbraiding him and telling him, "I wolde not suffer thy excuses in the evil counsell thou oft suggested to the Kynge, unpunished ; and truly, so it would have chanced, yf God had granted me lyfe, and thou would have found that to have been true ; evil counsell is the worst counsellor." Sir Richard retired in confusion, and the Prince was at once seized with a fresh paroxysm and fainting fits.

It was now certain that the end was near, so the Bishop of Bangor approached, and solemnly adjured the dying man to ask forgiveness of God, and of all those whom of set purpose he had offended. The Prince murmured, "I will" ; but the Bishop commanded him to ask pardon for his sins and to grant it in words to his enemies. But the Prince merely repeated "I will." The worthy Bishop thought that an evil spirit had tied his tongue, and so he sprinkled the four corners of the room with holy water. Meanwhile the dying Prince was fighting the fierce spirit of revenge in his own bosom, and at last he conquered. In a moment his whole manner changed, and clasping his hands, and looking up to heaven, he said, "I gyve thanks, O God, for all Thy benefytes, and, with all the paienes of my

soul, I humbly beseache Thy mercy to gyve me remission of all those synnes which I have wickedly committed against Thee: and of all mortall men whom willingly or ignorantly I have offended, with all my hearte I desyre forgiveness." Thereon he fell back on his bed, and peacefully departed this life.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon of Trinity Sunday, June 8, 1376, that Prince Edward of Woodstock breathed his last, just one month before his forty-sixth birthday. For the moment Englishmen could scarce credit his loss; the blank seemed too great ever to be filled. But not only in England did men mourn him. In France his old enemy King Charles had Masses said for his soul in the Sainte Chapelle in Paris. His old comrade, the Captal de Buch, was broken-hearted at the news; he refused to take any food, and within a few days died from sheer starvation.

For four months, from June 8th to September 29th, the coffin lay in state at Westminster, and all Englishmen who were able came to pay their last tribute to the greatest warrior of the age, and to mourn for him, "in whose health the hopes of Englishmen had flourished, in whose distress they had languished, in whose death they had died."

When Parliament met on Michaelmas Day preparations were at once begun for the actual funeral. Both houses of Parliament met at the Palace of Westminster and escorted the stately hearse, drawn by twelve black horses. Through the little village of Charing the procession swept, then to the City of London, past the



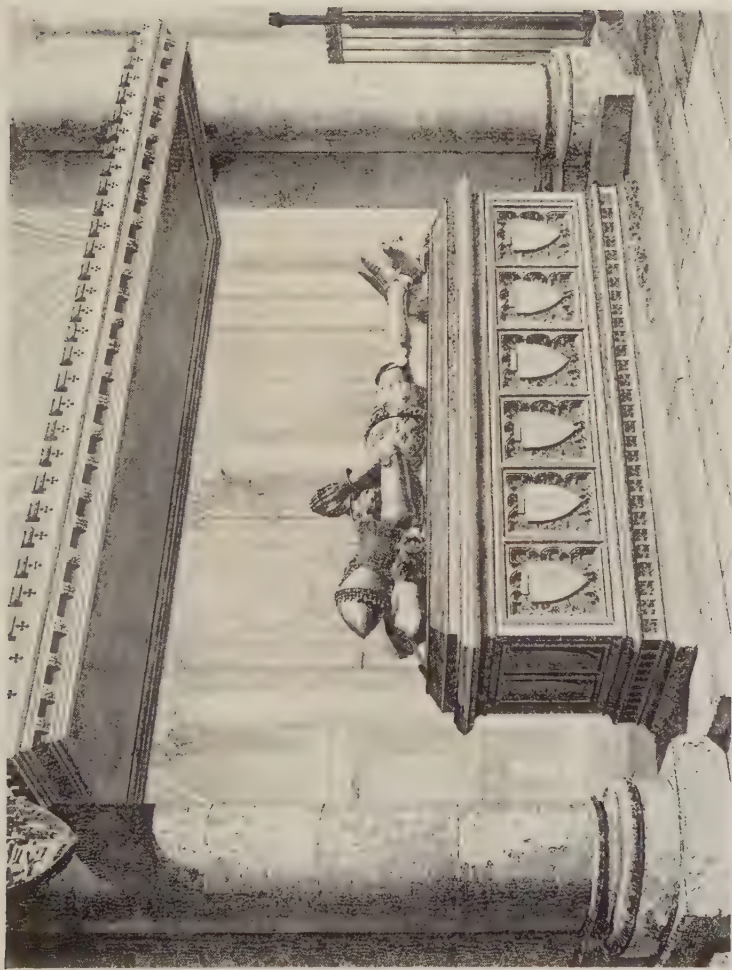
A XIV CENTURY BED AND BED HANGINGS

great Cathedral of St. Paul, thence past the Prince's Palace in Fish Street, across London Bridge, and onwards by the Pilgrims' Way to Canterbury, through the fair orchards of Kent. At the chapel of the Holy Cross, by the old gate of Canterbury town, the cortege was met—according to the Prince's directions as expressed in his will—by two knights mounted on black horses bearing his armour. The one clad in his battle harness with his surcoat embroidered with the arms of England and France, the other clad in his black tilting array wearing the ostrich plumes. Behind them came four black banners. Thus the coffin was escorted as far as the precincts of the Cathedral. Then it was carried by hand and placed on a bier in front of the high altar. In the presence of the King, the Duke of Lancaster, and the warriors of England, the solemn service was sung. The Prince had desired his body to rest in the chapel which he had himself founded in the crypt. But the Church of England deemed him worthy of a greater honour. Behind the high altar itself, on the south side of St. Thomas' shrine, they had prepared his resting-place.

There to this day he lies in his rich ornamental tomb, and to this day we can tell from his statue what manner of man he was for the eye to see. For Englishmen of all ages have held him in honour, and no one has desecrated the alabaster figure, which, as he directed, was placed on the top of his tomb. So there lies his likeness clad in full armour, and we see the "fine face with the marked Plantagenet features, the flat cheeks

and the well-chiselled nose," the eyes looking upwards, the hands clasped and pointing to heaven. Traces of the gilding still remain on the armour. On a pillar hang his gauntlets, his leopard-crested helmet, the empty scabbard of his sword, his wooden shield, and his velvet surcoat, embroidered with the arms of England and France. About the tomb are carved the ostrich feathers, his well-known badge, and interwoven with them are his favourite mottoes, "Houmont" (High Spirit); "Ich dien" (I serve). Round the tomb is engraved in Norman-French the long inscription he composed before his death, plain for all to read, telling—

"Thou who silent passest by,
Where this corse interred doth lie,
Hear what to thee I now shall show,
Words that from experience flow.
As thou art, once the world saw me,
As I am, so thou once shalt be."



TOMB OF THE BLACK PRINCE AT CANTERBURY

CHAPTER XVII

THE PRINCE'S CHARACTER

I N reviewing the life of the Black Prince, we must keep clearly before our eyes the circumstances and the ideals of the age in which he lived ; only by doing so can we arrive at anything like a just estimate of his character. Yet in the case of the Prince, as in that of all men whom fortune has placed in the seats of the mighty, we must remember that to no inconsiderable extent he was responsible for the ideals which animated his age. It is just this point which makes it so extremely difficult to form a just conclusion about those men whom the world has called great. No doubt, in the case of the ordinary man, we are satisfied if we find that, to the best of his ability, he has lived up to the principles which he found governing the lives of those around him. But from those who have laid claim to greatness we expect more than this ; we are not content unless we find that they have by their precept and example done something to raise the standard of life for their fellows. It is with this in our mind that we must examine the Prince's career.

In England during the middle part of the fourteenth century, as in every Christian country, it was an accepted principle that the service of God was the great duty of all true Christians. It is one thing to have a principle, it is quite another thing to put it into practice ; and, unfortunately, the age was one of decadence rather than growth. In Church and in State the principle was losing its vitality, just in proportion as men began to think more and more of form. We see this in architecture, where ornamentation is gaining ground at the expense of utility ; in men's clothing, where luxury has run wild ; in the Church, which is now regarded as the proper sphere for the younger sons of the great nobility ; in the new titles for which the so-called nobility have begun to struggle. In every stage and department of life we find a longing for the outward trappings, the non-essentials, rather than for that which is real and solid. In nothing is this more clearly seen than in the spirit of the chivalry of the age.

At the commencement of the century all over Europe a great advance had been made in the science of politics. Everywhere the sovereign had emerged victorious from the struggles against anarchy. The great feudatory had been conquered, thanks to the co-operation of King, Church, and people. The outward expression of this victory was the establishment of Parliaments, or Meetings of Estates of the Realm. The principle was becoming commonly accepted that what concerns all ought to be treated by all. Dimly people were grasping the idea of nationality. Meanwhile the

warriors of the age were gradually beginning to see that they had duties as well as privileges ; that their only aim in life ought not to be to aggrandise themselves at the expense of their neighbours. This new tendency is clearly shown in the introduction into the Arthurian legend of the story of the Holy Grail. Every young warrior began to long, according to his temperament, to perform the exploits of Sir Lancelot or Sir Percivale. Nothing, however, proves more clearly the decadence of the age than the fact that with the growth of this spirit of chivalry, we find the decay of the true Crusading spirit. The old fierce warriors of the twelfth and thirteenth century fought no doubt tooth and nail for their own hands, plundered their neighbours, seized their lands, and, if necessary, fought the King himself to retain what they had gained. But at the shame of the Holy City lying in the hands of the Moslem they were ready to leave their hard-won possessions, and to face the unknown terrors of the East for the sake of an idea.

Their descendants of the fourteenth century were very different. No longer would the knighthood of the whole country take the cross. To perform some doughty feat of arms, to carry out some fantastic vow, appealed to them more than the Crusading ideal. In a word, pride or glory was now the dominating note. Chivalry, no doubt, taught the denial of self, the strife on behalf of the weak, but it was at bottom sapped by a callous selfishness, for chivalry belonged to a caste and not to the people at large, and even those who

practised it best held that they had no duties to those outside their caste.

As we have said, the Black Prince was brought up in a Court steeped in the traditions of the Arthurian legend. Nothing perhaps can better illustrate this than the poem of the Oath of the Heron. It matters not whether it is historically correct; it breathes the very spirit of the age. It tells how by the taunt of cowardice the Count of Artois made Edward swear on the Heron, the most cowardly of birds, that he would invade France, and how each and every one of the assembled courtiers swore for fear of that same taunt that he would perform some romantic feat of arms.

The foundation of the Order of the Garter was an attempt to give embodiment to the Arthurian legend. The majority of the chroniclers of the day, notably the courtly Froissart, are much more eager to describe the personal adventures or deeds of daring of some celebrated knight, than to relate even the great battles of the war; diplomacy they scarce thought worthy of their pen unless it led up to war, and the deliberations of Parliament, which concerned the welfare of the people at large, they passed by with but scanty notice. The gallant conduct of the young Prince at Crecy, where he won his spurs and escaped death owing to the prowess of his standard-bearer, who, when he fell, covered him with the banner of Wales, and stood over him till the French knights were beaten back, was, in the opinion of the age much more to his honour than the victory of Poitiers or

Najera. It mattered but little to the men of that day whether the object was good or bad, so long as the warriors showed personal courage. It seemed strange to the knights that King John should be sorrowful on the evening of the battle of Poitiers, after that they had declared that he had won the prize for noble conduct in the fight. National disgrace and disaster they thought, ought to count as nought beside personal honour and achievement. To King Edward, monarch and warrior, no one was more contemptible than King Charles of France, who never showed his face on the field, and allowed his servants to fight his battles, while he pulled the strings of diplomacy from his chamber in Paris. Adventure was the essence of life, physical inaction was the depth of disgrace. Nothing can teach us this better than the Prince's cry to his old friend Sir John when he counselled prudence, "Chandos, Chandos, I've seen the time that you would have given me other advice, whether the cause was right or wrong."

That the Prince lived up to this ideal of the age no one will deny. Crecy, the ambushade at Calais, the sea-fight with the Spaniards, the battle of Poitiers, the campaign ending at Bretigny, Najera, Limoges, and the expedition to help Thouars, prove it to the hilt ; not to mention the reckless way he exposed his person times innumerable in the jousting yard and at the tournament. It was his duty and his privilege to set an example of gallant bearing to the knighthood of England, and so well did he set it that all Europe acknowledged him as the most gallant knight of the age. His Court was

celebrated throughout Europe as the best school for chivalry and knightly accomplishments.

To all he came in contact with the Prince was affable and courteous, and he lavished gifts with a free hand on his friends. No one was more scrupulous in performing that which he had promised to do, even when it was to his own disadvantage, as witness the surrender of du Guesclin. But unfortunately through the greater part of his life, he could not rise above the ordinary ideas of his age. To provide for the lavish entertainment of his friends, or for the ostentatious performance of his military obligations, he cared not how the money was raised. From his entry into public life he was never free from debt; his tenants groaned under the stern requisitions of his bailiffs. Unfortunately he could not understand that his tenants and debtors had as much, nay, even more claim on him than the knights and ladies by whom he was surrounded. It was the same in his government of Aquitaine; bred in the creed that it was ungallant to say no to a friend, his administration became notorious for its partiality. The places of importance and preferment were filled by his friends to the exclusion of the natives. Yet, when a wrong was brought before his eyes, no one was more anxious to put it right. Still, even when we blame his action in Aquitaine, we see under his partiality and indifference the signs of a great intellect. The way he raised the question of the protection of Don Pedro from a personal matter to a grave constitutional principle shows marked ability, while the diplomacy which bound Navarre,

and, later, Aragon to his side, was masterly in its performance and its aim.

As a ruler he had another great fault which was due to his upbringing rather than to his character. This was that fatal obstinacy which was responsible for the Spanish war, the *fouage*, and the insulting message to Lord d'Albret. But long years of sickness and disappointment taught him that which popularity and success had failed to impress on him. The upholder of the patriotic party in the Good Parliament is a very different man from the brilliant victor of Poitiers. What Simon de Montfort learned in ruling Gascony, Prince Edward had failed to learn there ; he was taught however, by illness, and by the love he had for his young son Richard. At the last he grasped the fact that government exists not only for the sovereign but for the people. Unfortunately his death prevented him from showing to his friends and companions how the laws of chivalry might be expanded to their proper conclusion, by breaking once and for all the barriers of caste. That the Prince had learned wisdom and that his noble nature would have made him stand firm by his new principles, we may safely presume ; but whether, if he had been spared and his health restored England would have been saved from the disorders which ruined the reign of his son it is difficult to say. It would have required a very firm hand and the most sympathetic treatment to solve the economic difficulties which had been aggravated by the Statute of Labourers and the long years of war. Vested interests would

have had to be attacked ; powerful nobles and merchant princes would have had to make concessions ; if any one could have forced them to do so it would have been Prince Edward of Woodstock.

Such, then, were the Prince's virtues and failings as a ruler. As a man he had much to commend him. He was scrupulous in performing his duties as a son, even to the detriment of his own career. Over-scrupulous, indeed, we may call him, since so strict was his sense of duty, and his abhorrence of doing anything that might be construed as opposition to his father that it was not until he was certain beyond doubt that the King was a mere cypher in the hands of adventurers that he at last took the lead against the Court party. But once he was sure of the fact that it was the politicians, not his father, who held the reins of government he lost no time in striking at those who had dragged his father's honour in the mud. Only on one other occasion did he act contrary to his father's will, and that was in the case of his own marriage.

Whatever had been his failings before married life, as a husband he was affectionate and kind. The love he bore his wife, the Princess Joan, never faltered ; nothing ever came between them to cause unhappiness. As a father he was ever mindful of his son's future. The death of his elder boy, Prince Edward, was a bitter blow, coming as it did at the moment of his own physical collapse. His later years were spent in attempting to smooth away the difficulties which he saw lay in the path of his remaining son, Richard.

To what extent we must blame him for the unfortunate character of that prince it is impossible to say. Anyhow, we must remember that Richard II. lost his crown, not from apathy and indulgence in pleasure, like Edward II., but from too high a notion of his own prerogative. This would tend to prove that his father had impressed on him the necessity of seeing to his own business.

As a master the Prince was adored ; his kindliness, his noble bearing, his courtesy, and his pleasant manners more than overcame his occasional outbursts of temper. Nothing can be more pathetic than the way in which he insisted on his young son swearing that he would never part with his old servants. Little, then, need we wonder that his servants and his soldiers worshipped him ; for, without sacrificing his dignity, he treated them as trusty comrades.

Generous to an extreme, as we have said, the Prince too often failed to remember that when he gave with one hand he too often took away with the other. His mind was too much inclined to deal with great things, too little apt to remember details. Somebody had served him well ; he must be rewarded, whether it was Sir James Audeley with a gift of five hundred marks per annum, or whether a man-at-arms who had lost his eye at Poitiers and received his twenty pounds a year ; it mattered not. It was his Seneschal's or his Treasurer's duty to find the money, it was his place to give it. But in his later years he seems to have conquered this habit. We no longer read of continual arrangements with his creditors,

and on his deathbed one of his greatest anxieties was that all his debts might be discharged in full.

As we have said before, the Prince's position and fortune conspired, from the time of the Crecy campaign, to place him in an extremely difficult situation. With all Europe ringing with his gallant deeds, the eldest son of the victorious King of England, good-looking, charming, and popular, debarred by his position from an active part in politics, the only wonder is that he turned out so well. That he sometimes fell we know; that his life on the whole became one constant round of pleasure is certain; but in the main his pleasures were manly pleasures of the tilting-yard, the chase, and war. Still, there is one thing for which he must bear the blame. Though one of the greatest landlords in England, he entirely neglected his duties. His estates were immense. They included the Duchy of Cornwall with outlying portions of Devon, the Principality of Wales, the Palatinate County of Chester, the Manor of Berkhamstead, the Honour of Wallingford, and vast estates in Oxford, Surrey, Berkshire, Kent, Dorset, and Wilts. The care of such an inheritance was the very best preparation for the duties of kingship, and yet he disregarded it.

One very striking trait in the Prince's character was his deep religious feeling. This, as we have said, he owed to his mother's careful instruction, and it grew stronger as he reached manhood. True it is that it was the fashion of the time to hear Mass daily and to give lavish gifts to the Church. But with the Prince it was not fashion but delight. Before each engagement, after

each victory, his first care was to give thanks to God. Before every important step in his career he made his pilgrimage to Canterbury; there at the shrine of Thomas à Becket he offered up his prayers and made rich offerings to the Trinity. To this day there remains the Chapel of Our Lady Under Croft, which he had built and dedicated to the Trinity in memory of his marriage. Strange to say, from the time of Elizabeth this chapel has been devoted to the use of the Huguenots, many of whose ancestors must have met the Prince in battle. That religion deeply influenced his life, and that he tried to the best of his ability to live as he prayed is certain. That he often failed we know. How strong was his temper, how bitter his passions we can see from his cruel treatment of the unfortunate inhabitants of Limoges, and from the difficulty he found on his deathbed of forgiving his enemies. Of Limoges all we can say is that it is the only time in his career when his temper completely got the better of him. On his deathbed, we must remember, he conquered his evil spirit in the end. During his long illness he displayed a bravery and a patience which showed how deeply rooted was his faith in God. "For all that tyme, commonly every month, he suffered the flux both of sede and blud, which two infirmities made him many times so feeble that his servants took him very often for dead: notwithstanding he bore all those things with such patience that he never seemed to offer unto God one mutinous word."

We turn now to more certain ground when we come

to examine the Prince's qualifications to be called a great soldier. In no one man do we expect to find all the military virtues, but without certain of them no soldier can be successful. Sound common sense, moral courage, steadfastness of purpose, the ability to profit by the mistakes of others—these four characteristics are common to all those who have been successful leaders of armies. Physical courage, personal magnetism, the power of organisation are extremely useful attributes, but are not absolutely necessary. The ability to see what can be performed with the means at hand is, after all, the whole art of war; the Black Prince was fortunately one of those who possessed this gift, which, after all, is nothing more than common sense. He read clearly the lesson which he had himself seen put into practice at Crecy, and which his father and his great-grandfather had gained by experience from the Scotch wars—that the age of shock tactics was past, that in a superior position the dismounted men-at-arms, aided by the archers, had nothing to fear from masses of armour-clad horsemen. He had also the merit of seeing clearly that the archer without the dismounted man-at-arms was as useless as the dismounted man-at-arms without the archer; that the success of the English tactics depended on the combination of the two and on the proportion of the one to the other. As the war proceeded we notice that he increased the proportion of archers until they were equal in number, sometimes superior, to the men-at-arms.

Then again, Crecy had taught him that this system

of tactics was excellent for acting on the defensive ; at Poitiers he showed how the system allowed for a return to the initiative by his gallant counter-attack ; while he proved at Najera that it was equally applicable for acting purely on the offensive. Again, he recognised that, though the men-at-arms were most useful for fighting on foot for purposes of strategy, they had increased mobility if mounted ; accordingly, during the raid ending at Poitiers he inaugurated a new system by mounting his archers and thus giving additional mobility to the whole of his army. Again, while his personal inclination and training led him to appreciate above all things personal prowess and distinction, and while, whenever possible, he encouraged this love of adventure among his knights, in the hour of battle no one was more stringent in enforcing obedience to the rule that the ranks should never be broken without his order ; for he knew well that it was only by concentrated action that the victory could be won, and he allowed no frittering away of his strength. He also insisted that there should be no marauding save by his consent. Hence it was that the English armies of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries owed to the Black Prince the stereotyping of a system of tactics which was infallible until the introduction of gunpowder, and the enforcement of a system of discipline superior to that of any other country.

It is one thing in the heat of the moment to say that you will beard your enemy at the head of sixty thousand men, it is quite another thing to undertake

the responsibility of fighting an action to gain or lose everything, when it is possible, perhaps, to escape by negotiations. In England during the fourteenth century there was many a youth who, at the age of sixteen, would have fought as bravely as did the young Prince of Crecy; but there were few men in England or Europe, who would have cared to undertake the responsibility of the battle of Poitiers, or of the manœuvres which carried the Anglo-Gascon force through the Pyrenees to Vittoria, and from Vittoria to Najera. There is a bravery which arises from the inability to see danger. As long as fortune smiles all is well, but with misfortune comes disaster. There is another form of bravery which goes hand in hand with prudence. Prudence teaches that success is most surely won by scanning all possibilities. This power of seeing clearly all sides of a question is one of the greatest gifts of nature; but it may be one of the greatest curses, for it too often leads to hesitation and irresolution. But where steadfastness of purpose and moral courage go hand in hand with prudence there we see great results. At Poitiers the Prince, after weighing all sides of the question, determined that he could not come to terms without sacrificing the honour and prestige of his country. He accordingly determined that there should be no surrender; that, if possible, he would retreat, and if that was impossible he would fight; when it was clear that the battle was inevitable, fight he did with no thought of retreat or surrender, carrying out his plan of battle to the logical conclusion,

and ultimately winning the victory by never swerving from the line of action which he had laid down after careful thought and consideration.

Like every other commander, the Prince made mistakes. Before Poitiers he despised the enemy, and neglected the elementary duties of keeping in touch with his foe. At Vittoria he ran himself into an impasse. But he had that quality which Wellington said was the greatest gift of generalship—the ability to profit by the mistakes of others; witness his sudden resumption of the offensive at Poitiers, after the French had squandered their strength by unsupported attacks, his sudden counter-march from Vittoria to Logrono, whereby he threatened the communication of the enemy with Burgos, and his sudden descent on Limoges after the hasty withdrawal of du Guesclin up the Garonne valley.

Of his personal courage there is no need to say more than has already been said, save to point out that in those days no leader could be successful who could not set an example of skill at arms and of courage to his men. Personal magnetism also he possessed to an extraordinary degree, and he increased his hold on his men by the care and attention which he spent on their welfare. Organisation was his forte. The successful raid into Provence, and the raid which ended at Poitiers were the result of hours of careful planning, supervision of detail and forethought. It is no small thing in these days, when organisation has been brought to a science, to provide for a force of sixty thousand men. But we

see that the Prince successfully arranged for the provision of such a force, and for the passage of his huge train of plunder over the barren uplands of the Auvergne Mountains. In the careful equipment of the invading army, which landed at Calais in 1359, we may not improbably recognise his directing hand, in the provision of the commissariat train, and the great number of pioneers and artificers. The passage of the Pyrenees in 1365 was a masterpiece of organisation, in the face of the difficulties of the country and the inclemency of the weather ; while the successful capture of Limoges, after a month of sap and tunnelling, stands forth as the greatest engineering achievement of the war.

To sum up, the Prince was one of the first organisers of the day ; as a tactician he was as great as his father, and probably greater, for at Poitiers he showed a quickness of appreciation and a power to grasp the psychological moment which must ever be remembered in all ages as one of the greatest feats of military skill known to history. As a strategist he surpasses the other great soldiers of the day, Edward III. and du Guesclin ; for great as they were as leaders of men and commanders on the field of battle, they never seem to have grasped the elements of strategy. But the Prince, in his Spanish campaign, clearly showed that he understood how to strike at his enemy's vulnerable point, his lines of communication. Again, his defence of Aquitaine, both in 1356 and in 1369 and 1370, was based on the sound principle of holding a few strategic points on the frontier and keeping the mass of his forces well in

hand. How sound was his system can best be estimated by the terrible rapidity with which the French regained the country once his controlling hand was removed. For thereafter the English forces were frittered away in detachments and there was no attempt at systematic defence.

There is still one question to answer, namely, how far the Prince's success as a general depended on his subordinates. That the Black Prince was fortunate in his divisional leaders no one will deny, when they remember the great names of the Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Oxford, Sir Thomas Felton, the Captal de Buch, and Sir John Chandos. But the choosing of subordinates is one of the great attributes of a successful leader; that he knew when and how to accept their advice only adds to his lustre, for after all he alone had to bear the responsibility. Still, the question of what the Prince owed to Sir John Chandos is different to that of what he owed to these other great soldiers. For Sir John was, as it were, his military guardian from boyhood. At Crecy he had watched over him; when he was sent to Aquitaine in 1355 he went as his first adviser, in fact what we should now call as chief of his staff. All through the two raids and during the actual battle of Poitiers he never left the Prince's side; during his administration of Aquitaine he acted as Constable; while in the Spanish campaign he acted as adviser to the young Duke of Lancaster who commanded the advance-guard. Chandos' record proves that he was a first-class soldier and a great

diplomatist. He felt so strongly that the imposition of the *fouage* was a mistake that he asked for leave of absence, but once war broke out he willingly responded to the Prince's call. But that he was quite indispensable to the Prince is quite another question; for, as we remember, he fell at the bridge of Lussac at the end of 1369; yet during the next year we notice but little difference in the organisation of the campaign, and indeed one of the Prince's greatest triumphs, the siege of Limoges, took place almost a year after Chandos' death. The conclusion seems to be that Chandos, great soldier as he was, had the supreme honour of teaching the Prince the art of war, but it looks as if in the end the pupil was as good as, nay, better than the master.

Such, then, was the hero of the Hundred Years' War. At times passionate and cruel, during long years of his life a seeker after pleasure, but withal a man at bottom affectionate, kind-hearted, with a deep religious feeling and an exalted sense of duty. A good master, a firm friend. A great leader, the idol of his men, he ever treated them as comrades and friends. Thus, without knowing it, he taught the true lessons of chivalry, and he unconsciously inspired others with his own nobility. Well he lived by his mottoes "Ich dien" (I serve); "Houmont" (High Spirit).

"Now let us pray God, the King of kings,
Who for us died upon the cross,
That He may pardon his soul
And grant him of His gift
The glory of His Paradise."

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